

Gal 10 Hc

THE
Practical Believer :
OR, THE
ARTICLES
OF THE
Apostles Creed,

Drawn out
To form a true Christians Heart
and Practice.

IN TWO PARTS.

The Third Edition, with several Additions :
An Account whereof is given by the Publisher.

By *John Kettlewell*, late Minister of *Coles-Hill*
in *Warwickshire*.

L O N D O N :

Printed by *J. Heptinstall* for *Robert Kettlewell*, and are to
be Sold by *D. Brown*, *J. Churchill*, *T. Horne*, *J. Knapton*,
R. Knaplock, *J. Wyatt*, *R. Wilkin*, *D. Midwinter*, *B. Lintot*,
T. Varnam, *G. Strahan*, *J. Bowyer*, *N. Cliffe*, *W. Taylor*,
R. Robinson, and *H. Clements*. 1713.

20

THE
 PRACTICAL BELIEVER:
 OR THE
 ARTICLES
 OF THE
 APOSTLES Creed.

Drawn out
 To form a true Christian Heart
 and Practice.

In Two Parts.

The Third Edition, with several Additions;
 An Account whereof is given by the Publisher.

By John Kettlewell, late Minister of Colchester,
 in his private.

L O N D O N.

Printed by J. Heston, for Robert Kettlewell, and are to
 be sold by D. Brown, R. Cornhill, T. Kettle, J. Kettle,
 R. Kettle, J. Kettle, R. Kettle, D. Kettle, R. Kettle,
 T. Kettle, R. Kettle, J. Kettle, R. Kettle, W. Kettle,
 R. Kettle, and W. Kettle. 1713.

THE
Practical Believer.

The First Part.

OF THE
NATURE and CERTAINTY
OF
Christian Faith,
AND
The Knowledge of God:
OR, AN
Explication of the Divine
Attributes, and Providence.

Febr. 28.
1687.

*Imprimatur Liber cui Titulus, The Practi-
cal Believer, &c. Guil Needham R. R.
in Christo P. ac D. D. Wilhelmo Archiep.
Cant. & Sac. Domest.*

By John Kettlewell, late Minister of Coles-Hill
in Warwickshire.

L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year, M DCC XIII

THE
Practical Believer.

The First Part.

OF THE
NATURE AND CERTAINTY
OF
Christian Faith,
AND
The Knowledge of God:

Explicitly
Divine
Evidence.



Imprimatur Libr. in Thesaur. The Practi-
cal Believer, &c. Gual. Weston R. R.
in Classis & in D. D. W. Weston & Co.
Cur. & Imp. D. Weston

By John Kettlewell, late Minister of Coler-Hill
in Northamptonshire.

L O N D O N .
Printed in the Year, M D C C X L I I I .

THE
PUBLISHER
TO THE
READER

By another Hand.

I Should not have troubled the Reader upon this occasion, if it had not been thought necessary, that he should receive some information in reference to those Alterations that are made in this present Impression of the *Practical Believer*.

The Publisher to the Reader.

The Learned and Pious Author, who with so much Judgment as well as Christian Zeal, composed this *admirable Treatise*, and published it in his life-time, thought fit before his death to revise it with great care and exactness, and made such Alterations as tend very much to its greater Perfection. Many Questions and Answers are rendered more clear and perspicuous; new light is frequently administered, either by a further illustration of an Argument he had already used, or by adding fresh Reasons to explain and enforce the Subject; by strengthening it with other Authorities from the Holy Scriptures, or when necessary, with Quotations from Primitive Antiquity. These Circumstances more particularly appear in page the 112, concerning the proportion between Sin and Punishment; in page 256, about

The Publisher to the Reader.

about the Personality of the Holy Ghost, the Third Person in the ever blessed Trinity ; in page 312, concerning the Fundamental Articles of Faith ; and in page 354, about the Eternity of Hell Torments. With several other lesser Emendations, which are not necessary to be mentioned.

All these Additions and Alterations were left in the Reverend Author's own hand writing, with which I was well acquainted ; with a particular Order, that all future Editions of this and other of his Books should be made according to those Corrections and Additions he had inserted in revising of them. This *Practical Believer* has been indeed once printed since the Author's Death, without the Improvements that are now offered ; the reason whereof was, that those that engaged in that Edition did not know

The Publisher to the Reader.

know the interest the worthy Widow of the Author had in this Copy, and therefore she was not consulted, who was the only Person that had the original Alterations and Additions in her keeping; and tho' she had afterwards full Satisfaction for her right in that Impression, yet when the Book was published, it was too late to correct the Dress it appeared in.

This Excellent Treatise needs no recommendation, the Voice of the Publick has already bore testimony to its worth and usefulness. And indeed an Undertaking that sets the *Nature and Certainty of the Christian Faith* in a clear light, as it is of great Concernment to Religion, so it cannot but be very grateful to all Pious and Judicious Christians; for except Men live according to the Belief they profess, and make their Creed the Rule of their Actions,

The Publisher to the Reader.

ctions, their Religion is vain. They lose at present all those advantages which are inseparable Attendants upon sincere Piety and Virtue, advantages that can only be understood by those that make the Experiment; and they forfeit all future Hopes of Eternal Happiness, which belong only to those who *purifie themselves as GOD is pure.* And therefore tho' the *Speculative Infidel* will not be able to stand in Judgment, notwithstanding his Pretences to an impartial Search after Truth; yet the *Practical Unbeliever*, who denies God in his Works, must expect a more severe condemnation; whose Circumstances receive this aggravation, that he stands condemned by the light of his own Mind, and does violence to those Principles he has always entertained as revealed by Divine Inspiration.

Thro'

The Publiſher to the Reader.

Thro' the Great Goodneſs of God the *Chriſtian Faith* is confirmed to us by ſo many convincing Arguments, whether we conſider thoſe which are External, conſiſting in the undoubted Miracles, wherewith it was eſtabliſhed, and in the aſtoniſhing way and manner of its propagation; or thoſe which are internal, woven into the very Conſtitution and Frame of the Religion it ſelf; that I cannot comprehend how any Man that ſincerely purſues Truth, with the leaſt reliſh and taſte for Vertue, can reſiſt the Evidence which the Chriſtian Religion offers. The ſtreſs of which Cauſe is not ſo much to be laid upon any one Argument, as upon ſeveral Conſiderations which muſt be weighed together, and being ſo united make a full demonſtration of the Truth of it. So that if Men do not now believe, their Infidelity is incurable and unpardonable;

The Publiſher to the Reader.

nable; they reſiſt the laſt and beſt Remedy God has provided for them, and by *not believing the Record God has given of his Son make God a Lyar*; an Affront which calls for ſevere Vengeance, and will certainly meet with the dreadful Fate it deſerves.

But however to own the Truth of the Chriſtian Religion, and to contradict it in our Lives by indulging our ſelves in all manner of Vice, as it is in it ſelf the moſt inconſiſtent thing imaginable, ſo it will moſt certainly draw down upon us the greateſt Punishment, for we are aſſured by our Saviour himſelf, *that the Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many Stripes.*

God expects from all thoſe that call themſelves Chriſtians a great degree of Perfection; and ſuch as
con-

The Publiſher to the Reader.

content themſelves only with the bare name, have reaſon to expect from him all the dreadful Effects of his Wrath and Indignation. The Nature of his Laws which are to govern our Conduct, and the Perfection of that Example which is propoſed for our imitation, plainly demonstrate that the *peculiar People he purchaſed to himſelf* were to be diſtinguiſhed by *their Zeal for good Works*. For what can be the meaning of Holy Laws, but ſuch as enjoin a Holy Life? what can be implied in being a Chriſtian, but the obſervation of the Laws of the Chriſtian Inſtitution? For a Law that obliges to nothing is no Law. And a Pattern that is ſet before us can never do us any ſervice, if we do not ſtrive to copy after it.

St. *Paul* has uſed a very emphatical Expreſſion to make all Chriſtians ſenſible of the great Obligations they

The Publisher to the Reader.

they lie under to form themselves upon the Model of the Blessed Jesus. He assures the *Galatians*, and in them all Christians, *that as many of them as had been Baptized into Christ, had put on Christ*, and he delivers the same thought to the *Romans* by way of Precept, *put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.*

We know that the same Actions are not proper for all sorts of habits; the World, as corrupt and as bad as it is, would censure a Clergyman for appearing in his Gown at the Play-House; and tho' he is always obliged to a Modest and Decent Behaviour, yet when he appears in his Sacred Vestments at the Altar, the least irreverent Look, the least negligent and trifling Gesture, shocks us and gives Offence. It would very ill become a Judge to dance in those Garments that distinguish him
upon

The Publisher to the Reader.

upon the Bench. Even a Prince
cloathed with all his Robes of State
and Ceremony has more Reserve
than in his ordinary Dress ; and all
sorts of Persons are under some
Confinement as to the Rules of
their Behaviour, when they first put
on deep Mourning. Now the Apostle
assures us, that from the moment
we are made Members of Christ's
Church by Baptism, the habit we
are cloathed with is Jesus Christ
himself ; and who can express the
Reverence and Respect which so ve-
nerable and august an Habit re-
quires from us ? as is well observed
by St. Chrysostome. (a) Now this
putting on Christ can imply no less,
than that we should be cloathed
with all Christian Vertues, and that
by all our Actions, and by our
whole Conduct it should appear
that Jesus Christ lives in us. For as
putting on the new Man signifies to
walk

(a) Hom.
XXIV. in
Epist. ad
Rom.

The Publiſher to the Reader.

walk as new Men in newneſs of Life, ſo the *putting on the Lord Jeſus* muſt import our entire Conformity to his Doctrines and Holy Life.

And indeed this Example of the Bleſſed Jeſus, if I may be allowed to purſue the Apoſtle's Metaphor, is a Garment that will fit all ſorts of Perſons; for our Saviour affected nothing ſingular in his outward appearance and behaviour. He did not, as *St. John the Baptiſt*, live in a Wilderneſs, but paſt the firſt Thirty Years of his Life in the Houſe of his Parents; where he practiſed Humility and Obedience; where according to the Tradition of the Church he worked at his reputed Father's Trade, to incline us to avoid Idleneſs; and where he daily gave viſible marks of an increaſing Vertue, to teach us that we ought never to be ſatisfied with our own

a

at-

The Publiſher to the Reader.

attainments, but continually preſs after greater Degrees of Piety. When he appeared in the World he pretended to no particular austerities; and tho' he greatly commended St. *John Baptist*, who choſe that thorny path, yet he governed his own Life by other Measures. The way he walked in was ſo plain, that Men are left without excuſe, if they neglect to follow him. To this purpoſe he was pleaſed to diſtinguiſh himſelf upon all occaſions by a profound Humility and Meekneſs, by a particular Concern for the Poor and Needy, and a great Tenderneſs and Compaſſion for the Miſerable People that applied to him, and by an extreme deſire of doing good to all Mankind. He was Eminent for a great Love of Devotion, entire Submiſſion to the Will of God, an indifference for the Riches and Pleaſures of Life, an invincible Patience

The Publisher to the Reader.

tience under the greatest Sufferings, and above all, a perfect Innocence, and so great a Freedom from all Sin, that he defied his Enemies to charge him with the least appearance of Evil.

These are Vertues that are necessary for Men of all Conditions, and suited to the several Circumstances of Life, and therefore we cannot wrap them too close about us.

Now when we are under the Obligation of such Holy Laws, and have the advantage of such a perfect Example for our direction, how inexcusable are we if do not depart from all Iniquity? But since the frailty of our Nature and the strength of Temptation will be apt to overcome us without the assistance of God's Grace, let us frequently

a 2

The Publisber to the Reader.

quently pray in the Words of the Church; *that God would grant to all them that are admitted into the Fellowship of Christ's Religion, that they may eschew those things that are contrary to their Profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same, thro' our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Amen.

May 19. 1712.

Rob. Nelson.

THE

T H E

PREFACE.

Reader,

I *Here present thee with a Discourse upon the Holy Christian Faith : which, as we all profess seriously to believe ; so should we carefully endeavour to answer, and adorn, with an Holy and Christian Practice. In this, I have endeavoured to give such accounts of Almighty God, as may encourage all good Men to love and serve him ; and deter all evil Men, from presuming on his Favour, or provoking his Displeasure. I have drawn out the consideration of his Providence, into the usual Cases and*

The Preface.

Occurrences, and shown how we may live upon it, and give our selves the true comfort and advantage thereof, in all events and transactions. And all the other Articles of the Creed, I have endeavoured to set off in such particulars, as we are most concerned to know, and which may give them the greatest life and power with us. In the whole, I have aim'd to lay before thee the Sum of Christian Doctrine, that in an Age, which abounds with unchristian falsehoods, we may keep stedfast in Christian Truths: and that among all the Truths of Christianity, we may lay out our Care and Zeal on those, which are most important, and worthy of all acceptance.

My great design in this Treatise, is to lend what help I am able, to those, that sincerely desire, and seriously set themselves to live as they believe, and to make Faith a Governing Grace: Showing how we may serve our selves of it, and give up our Souls to be ordered and directed thereby, in all our man-
ni-

The Preface.

nifold, and most important Cases and Concerns. And looking all along at this mark, in passing through all the Articles of the Creed, I have not sought to fill up a Book, by inserting all that may be truly, or pertinently said: But have applied my self to instruct thee, in such, as I thought the leading, and governing Notions; to inculcate those, which seem to me the most concerning, and powerful Truths; to set off such particulars about them, as seem fittest to affect us, or lie nearest unto Practice; and to note wherein we are to follow and attend to them, in the course, and various exigencies of our lives. And hoping this may prove beneficial to the instruction and use of plain Christians, who have neither leisure to peruse, nor capacity to retain larger Volumes; I have endeavour'd to treat of these things with convenient brevity. But withal to comprise so much, not only of necessary, but profitable Doctrine, as may be sufficient to any Man's guidance and encourage-

The Preface.

ment, who will set himself diligently to learn, and walk in the light of it.

I am not without hopes, that this Discourse may, in some degree or other, serve the end, for which it is sincerely sent abroad, viz. of doing some Honour and Service to the ever Blessed Trinity, and making an admirable, and most efficacious Faith, more lively and powerful in some, that profess it. And if thou, good Reader, shalt reap any benefit by it, as thou wilt not fail to give God the Praise, for suiting and supplying thy Necessity, by the Weakness of any whom he employs: So one thing I heartily request of thee, which is all the return, that in this World I either expect, or desire, that thou wilt thus far remember the poor Instrument of thy Mercy, as in the fervency of thy Devotion, to put up one Prayer to our common Father, for his Salvation, who with a very ready and willing mind, has taken all this pains to promote thine.

THE

THE CONTENTS.

PART I.

*Of the Nature, and Certainty of Christian
Faith, &c.*

CHAP. I.

Of Christian Faith.

What is meant by Faith in Christ. When this suitably affects us, it justifies, or avails to Righteousness. An account of several particulars of Christian Belief, with the respective Affections, and Practices, which are suitable to them. All these are reasonably to be expected from them, though they do not follow, where Men will act inconsistently to their Principles, and against Reason. Faith with its suitable effects, the same as Faith and Repentance. On this account such effects ascribed to it, when alone, as are due only to it and Repentance in conjunction. This Faith with its suitable effects, was that which justified the Old-Testament Worthies. And is to justify all good Christians. When St. Paul opposeth justifying-Faith

The Contents.

Faith to the Deeds of the Law, he speaks of the Deeds of the Jewish Law. That which fits Faith for these effects, and distinguishes the Faith of Saints and Sinners, is, First, The Sincerity of it. Secondly, It's Strength and Firmness. This consists in its being assured. And honest, or seated in one who makes conscience to keep his word. And resolute. In what sense Faith may be called an act of Recumbency, or leaning and rolling on Christ for Salvation. And the band, to receive and apply him. 'Tis no part of Faith to believe our Sins are pardon'd, nor of infidelity to doubt of it. Of the innocence many times of such doubts. And of some good Mens Confidence of their own forgiveness.

C H A P. II.

That Jesus is the Christ from Ancient Prophecies.

Among those Prophecies, which prove Jesus to be the Christ, First, Some prescribe the time of his coming. This they mark out by the nearness of such notable Occurrences, and Revolutions, as would fall under all Mens observation. And by fixing the very Year he should appear in. Accordingly there was a general expectation of him at that time. His coming not put off beyond the time appointed, for the sins of the People. An account, why the Jews, who read these clear Notes of the time in their own Prophets, are not convinced by them. Secondly, Others assign many peculiar, and visible Notes, whereby he may be demonstratively pointed out from all other Men. As,

- 1. His being born of a Virgin. This in some sense spoken of a Virgin of that time, but principally of Messiah, and then only fully accomplished, when Jesus came. This cleared from exceptions.*
- 2. His having the Spirit of Miracles, resting on him.*
- 3. His Death, with the particular manner, and circumstances of it. And his returning to Life again.*
- 4. His putting an end to the Jewish*

Sa-

The Contents.

Sacrifices and Mosaick Covenant, and bringing in a New one, and a better to supply its defects. 5. His erecting an Universal Empire, and appearing as a mighty King. This not a Secular, but a Spiritual Kingdom. 6. His converting the Heathen World, from their Idol-worship. Jesus silenced the Oracles, and cast the impure Spirits out of their Temples. This an Argument for him, not only as accomplishing a Prediction, but also as 'tis plainly a Divine thing. The Prophecies of an Universal Probity, and Peace under Messiah, cleared up, by an account both of their meaning, and accomplishment. The fore-cited Prophecies understood of Messiah by the Ancient Jews, though denied by some later in hatred to our Jesus.

C H A P. III.

Proving Jesus to be the Christ, from other Divine Testimonies.

Jesus proved to be the Christ. 2. From the testimony of John the Baptist. John knew this by Revelation, and had it confirmed by a sign. He was an acknowledged Prophet, and of most clear and currant fame. And gave this testimony, before he was personally acquainted with Jesus. 3. From the testimony of Jesus himself. Several considerations shewing the validity of this testimony, though it were in his own case. This not impugned by Christ's words, John 5. 31. nor gives any colour or advantage to Fanatical Enthusiasts. 4. From his Miracles. These no lying wonders, as may appear, because shewn in several instances not imitable by Demons. As, 1. Foretelling future Contingences. An account of Demon-Predictions among the Gentiles. 2. Discerning Hearts, and Thoughts. 3. Raising the Dead. 4. Casting out Devils, of most stubborn ranks, and in greatest numbers and combinations. It may also appear from their intent

The Contents.

intent and design; and from their numbers, and the manner of working them. No opposing the Miracles of Moses against Christ's Miracles, because they were wrought to set aside the Law of Moses. That Law was given with a design to be altered. An account how for all that, several of its Precepts are justly called Statutes for ever. 3. From the testimony of the Father, who declared Jesus to be the Christ by audible Voices. And by raising him from the dead, and shewing him in full possession of his pretences.

The

The Contents.

The Knowledge of GOD : or, an Explication of the Divine Attributes, and Providence.

C H A P. I.

Of the Being, and Attributes of God.

The World declares there is a GOD. He is an eternal Spirit, on whom all things depend. Of God's Holiness. Several things explained, which seem to infringe it: as when God is said to harden Mens hearts. To inflict Spiritual blindness, and a reprobate sense. To send a false Spirit to deceive Ahab: and strong delusion. God oft gives Men up to the delusion of evil Spirits. Cautions to prevent this. To give Men a Spirit of slumber. An account, how notwithstanding God's irreconcilable hatred of sin, it is still suffered in the World. Of God's Goodness. Several false Notions of it. In what things it chiefly consists. Of God's Justice, or Righteousness. This shown in giving Righteous Laws and passing Righteous Judgments according to them, without respect of Persons. His Punitive Justice cleared from misplacing Punishments, in punishing one for another's sins. And from misproportioning them, in allotting eternal Punishments, to momentary Sins. Some false aspersions on this just God wiped off. Of God's Presence in all places. The effect of this. Of his Faithfulness. This shown by inviolable Performance of his Promises: And interpreting them without evasion, or secret reserve, according to their plain meanings. And
by

The Contents.

by constant adherence to his Friends and Faithful Servants: which is no encouragement for any to return to their former sins. Of God's Wisdom. This is shown in setting a just rate and estimate on all things; so that he is neither gained, nor lost by worthless services. In discerning the just Power and Force of all Means, and success of all Methods; which should beget the greatest Reverence for all his Ordinances. In seeing the best time and seasons, for every purpose: so that we must never think any Deliverance too long delayed, or Affliction too fast hastened. No reason to pretend to the Love of God without loving, and imitating these Divine Excellencies.

CH A P. II.

Of God's Providence.

God preserves all things which he hath made. And governs them. He observes all our actions. And all our temptations. He disposes of all good events. For he gives the fruits of the Earth. And Children. And success in business. How this should influence us in any enterprise, shown in sundry particulars. He gives promotion. And the favour of Men. And life and health to enjoy all other Blessings. And all Spiritual Mercies. He disposes also of ill events. As death of Friends. Unfortunate accidents, that afflict us in our Bodies, or Goods. Crosses, and obstructions, in our designs and business. Sufferings from ill Men. How God stints, and governs these. No excuse of their unjust violence, to say they are God's Instruments, and follow Providence. He sends also miscarriages of State, and Government: and presides in the most tumultuary, and distressed times. In these, still have Faith in Providence. But God must not be called the Author, or sender of those evils, which we bring down upon our selves, by our own faults, or follies.

The Contents.

C H A P. III.

Of God's Almightynefs.

God's Almightynefs implies, 1. God's Might and Strength to effect all things, viz. all that are the object of any Power. And that are not repugnant to his own Nature. The exerting this Power creates God no labour. He can do whatsoever any things of the World can do. This an encouragement to all generous Enterprizes. And to build on Providence, especially where we have a Promise. The value and acceptance of this trust, in a seemingly most improbable case. And whatsoever any things of the World are inclined, or wont to do, he can hinder them from doing. This also a ground of trust in God. And to keep us in any distress, from flying to unlawful aids. How God will use this Power. 2. His Sovereignty and Power, to command, and order all things. This includes, 1. Empire, as a Sovereign Ruler. What things God may command. The unalterableness of some commands. 2. Dominion, as a Sovereign Proprietor. In what cases God allots good and ill, out of his Power of Prerogative, not according to Mens pre-dispositions. Where he dispenses Arbitrarily, he doth it always most Wisely, and Reasonably. Saving Grace he allots, not in way of Arbitrary Prerogative, but according to Covenant Rules, And Heaven and Hell, in way of Legal Trials. A brief account of the Rectitude of God's Nature, which limits his Sovereign Will, from the Scriptures. This Sovereign Lord and Proprietor, as an All-sufficient, so no selfish Being. Several good uses of God's Sovereign Dominion. God's Majesty and Almightynefs, must beget fear and reverence.

The

The ...

...

O

Wh
f
c
n
t
t
c
w
t
a
o
j
f
F
h
E
F

...

The Practical Believer.

PART I.

Of the Nature, and Certainty of Christian Faith, &c.

CHAP. I.

Of Christian Faith.

The Contents.

What is meant by Faith in Christ. When this suitably affects us, it justifies, or avails to Righteousness. An account of several particulars of Christian Belief, with the respective Affections, and Practices; which are suitable to them. All these are reasonably to be expected from them; though they do not follow, where Men will act inconsistently to their Principles, and against Reason. Faith with its suitable effects, the same as Faith and Repentance. On this account such effects ascribed to it, when alone, as are due only to it and Repentance in conjunction. This Faith with its suitable effects, was that which justified the Old Testament Worthies. And is to justify all good Christians. When St. Paul opposes justifying-Faith to the Deeds of the Law, he speaks of the Deeds of the Jewish Law. That which fits Faith for these effects, and distinguishes the Faith of Saints and Sinners, is, First, The sincerity of it. Secondly, Its strength and firmness.

firmness. This consists in its being assured. And honest, or seated in one who makes conscience to keep his word. And resolute. In what sense Faith may be called an act of Recumbency, or leaning and rolling on Christ for Salvation. And the hand, to receive and apply him. 'Tis no part of Faith to believe our sins are pardon'd, nor of infidelity to doubt of it. Of the innocence many times of such doubts. And of some good Mens confidence of their own forgiveness.

Question. **S**ince Men are made to live for ever, and have Souls capable of Eternal Salvation, What must they do to save them?

Answer. *Believe in Christ, and repent.* For Faith, and Obedience, which, where Men have sinned before, is call'd Repentance, are the conditions of Salvation.

Quest. Is Faith in Christ one thing necessary to Salvation.

Ans. Yes. *He that heareth my word, says our Saviour, is passed from death unto life, and shall not come into condemnation, John 5. 24. He that believeth the Gospel, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damned, Mark 16. 16.*

Quest. Will all Faith save Men?

Ans. No; for the Devils themselves believe, says St. James, Jam. 2. 19. But the saving Faith, is only that which suitably affects us, and works Repentance: Repentance, as well as Faith, being necessary to Eternal Happiness.

Quest. Since Faith is in it self one part of the condition of our Happiness, and instrumental also to work the Rest, it is necessary to understand well what it is, and wherein a saving Faith differs from other sorts of Faith. Pray what is meant by Faith in Christ?

Ans. In general, it is the believing all that is declared to us by Christ: and sometimes more particularly some things, which are declared of him. The believing what is said by him, is called Faith in Christ, as his Authority and Credit is the Ground, and Reason of our Belief: and the believing things which are said of him, is so called, as he himself is the object of it. And when this belief suitably affects us, and we so resolve, and practise thereupon,

upon, as may be reasonably expected from Persons under such Persuasions, then is it imputed unto us for Righteousness.

Quest. Is Faith in *Christ*, believing all that is declared to us by *Christ*, or a giving trust and credit to his Word?

Ans. Yes, and so the Scriptures intimate, when they call it *faith* † of *Christ*, that is, of his Teaching and Directing; and, as it is sometimes in the Original, *faith* * to *Christ*, that is, to him testifying and declaring; and Faith or belief of the † Gospel, and of the * truth, the Gospel being that Word of truth, which, on his Credit and Authority, he testifies and declares to us. Besides, Faith or Belief in *Christ*, is expressed in Scripture by these several Phrases, of † bearing and receiving the word of *Christ*, of * receiving the word of God, of † receiving *Christ*, of * receiving the testimony of *Christ*, of † coming unto *Christ*. All which, as is evident from the places alleged, being made only so many other words for believing, show plainly that Faith or Belief, is the crediting of his Word, and assenting to those things, which are declared by him. Which declarations, for their surer derivation to After-times, were all put in Writing by his Holy Apostles and Evangelists before their Deaths, and are all contain'd in the Holy Scriptures.

Quest. Indeed, if Faith in *Christ* be a belief of *Christ's* word, it plainly implies bearing, and receiving it; and that Word being sent down to us by him from God, receiving it, is a receiving the word of God; and believing it on *Christ's* Authority, is receiving his testimony. But how do the two other Phrases, of receiving *Christ*, and coming unto *Christ*, shew the Faith which they denote, to be a belief of his Word?

Ans. To receive one, notes different things, as it is apply'd to different cases. Men receive a Guest, when they entertain him in their Houses; a Ruler, when they become his subjects; a Friend, when they admit him to intimacies; but a Prophet and Teacher, under which notion *Christ* claims belief, when they credit his Doctrine and Message. And because they who thus believ'd him, came personally to attend and learn of him, and associated themselves with him, as they who retain'd to, and followed him; therefore was this belief of him, in a literal sense, a coming to him.

Quest. Doth Faith in *Christ* signifie also in Scripture, the believing some things concerning *Christ*?

Ans. Yes, and those too such things, as are apt to beget trust, and confidence in him. For so, though the *Devils* know and believe the truth of all that which *Christ* has declared, yet *S. James* says they want the right Faith, because they only tremble at it, and cannot hope in the least, that ever he will do them any good, *Jam.* 2. 19.

Quest. What are we thus particularly to believe concerning *Christ*?

Ans. Not only in the general, That he is the Son of God, and the *Christ* or Messiah, for professing whereof *S. Peter* was pronounced Blessed, *Mat.* 16. 16, 17. But also particularly, to believe that he died for our sins, to reconcile us unto God by his Death, whence it is especially called faith in his blood, *Ro.* 3. 25. That he rose again from the dead, which whoso believes in his heart, says *S. Paul*, shall be saved, *Rom.* 10. 9. And that he is now ascended into Heaven, and seated on the right Hand of God, there to intercede and mediate for us, till at last he shall come again to judge the World, and eternally reward or punish all, according as their Lives have been good or bad.

Quest. So that I perceive Faith in *Christ*, is our believing the Gospel, and all things contained therein, concerning God, our Selves, or another World, upon *Christ*'s Authority. And particularly, believing what he therein declares concerning his being the *Christ* and Son of God, who died, rose again, ascended to God's right Hand, and shall return again to judge the World, as is also expressed in the Creed. And that for the sake of his death to expiate sins, God will be reconciled to Sinners upon their true Repentance?

Ans. Yes, this is the true Faith in *Christ*, upon profession whereof the *Apostles* at first enter'd Men as Disciples, *S. Peter* without more ado Baptizing the three thousand that gladly receiv'd the Word, wherein he had declared to them these very things, *Act.* 2. 41. And the Christian Church ever since admitting them to Baptism, upon their professing Faith of the *Apostles Creed*, which contains the same particulars.

Quest.

Quest. By this I perceive what Faith in *Christ* is. Pray what wants this to make it saving and available unto Righteousness?

Ans. Only that it suitably affect us, or work in us such Godly Affections, Purposes, and Practices, as may justly be expected from Men of such persuasions.

Quest. Pray what are these suitable affections?

Ans. They will best appear, by running over briefly some of the chief of those particulars, which we believe on the word of *Christ*, and which are to produce them in us.

Quest. We believe that *God is our Father*, who at first made us, and still preserves, and provides for us, with Paternal care and tenderness. How must this affect us?

Ans. With Love, Honour, and dutiful Obedience. *If I be a Father, where is my honour?* Mal. 1. 6.

Quest. We believe him to be infinite in Justice, and Almighty in Power, able, and ready, as to confer whatsoever is desirable on those that fear, so to inflict whatsoever is dreadful on those that affront him. What should this beget in us?

Ans. Reverence, and godly fear. *Fear him, who when he hath killed, hath Power to cast both Body and Soul into Hell, yea, I say unto you fear him,* Luk. 12. 5. & Matth. 10. 28.

Quest. We believe him to be perfectly Righteous, that is, most Holy, and Just, and True, and Faithful, and Merciful, and Patient, and pleased only with what is so. How ought we, in reason, to be influenced by this belief?

Ans. Made Holy, and Righteous thereby as he is, that so we may be like him the Supreme Object of all imitation, and find favour in his Eyes. *If we know that he is Righteous, we know that every one that doth Righteousness, is born of him,* 1 Joh. 2. 29.

Quest. We believe that his Providence orders all events. What should we do upon this?

Ans. Be content under all that happens, and say, as the Holy Psalmist, *I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it,* Plal. 39. 9. or, as old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good,* 1 Sam. 3. 18.

Quest. We believe that this Providence will never leave, nor forsake those that fear God, Heb. 13. 5. that it will make all the evil which they meet with here, to work for

their good, Rom. 8. 28. That the desire of the Righteous shall be granted, Prov. 10. 24. That they shall not want any good thing, Psal. 34. 10. And that, when they seek first the kingdom of God, all other things shall be added to them, without their being solicitous about them, Matth. 6. 33, 34. What would one in reason expect from Men so persuaded?

Ans. That they trust in the living God, 1 Tim. 6. 17. that they lay aside all distracting solicitude and thoughtfulness for outward things, Matth. 6. 25, 31, 34. That they be careful for nothing, but making their case known to God, cast all their care upon him, who careth for them, Phil. 4. 6. and 1 Pet. 5. 7.

Quest. We believe that he will not forget his word, although the performance of it be long delaied, but remember it faithfully, and in due time give it effect. What should this work in us?

Ans. Patience and Perseverance of Hope, whereof all have need, that after they have done the will of God, they may receive the Promise: It being God's way, for some time to exercise Mens Faith of a Promise, before he accomplish it, Heb. 10. 36, 37.

Quest. We believe that he is able to fulfil it when it is most improbable, and unlike to take effect, there being no word impossible with God, Luk. 1. 37. and that he will do it. What should be the effect of this?

Ans. To beget in us a firm Faith, and unshaken confidence in his Promise: such as Abraham's was, for having a Child, when both He and his Wife Sarah, were past Age for Children; and of having a numerous Issue by him, when at Gods command he was just about to slay him, Rom. 4. 20, 21. and Heb. 11. 19.

Quest. We believe, that for Christ's sake, God will give good things to those, who seek to him for them, and that if they ask, it shall be given them, Matth. 7. 7. What should follow upon this opinion?

Ans. Prayer and Devotion. So that whatsoever Temporal, or Spiritual Blessings Men stand in need of, they should seek to God the Author, and by Jesus Christ the procurer of them.

Quest. We believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and the Christ that was to come into the World. What would any serious, and considerate Man do, who is so persuaded?

Ans.

Ans. Confide in him, and worship and submit to him, as a most just object of our Homage, Trust, and Adoration.

Quest. We believe this same *Jesus* to be our Lord. What should he in reason do, who believes and professes that?

Ans. Keep his Commandments, and observe his Orders. For *why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?* Luke 6. 46.

Quest. We believe that he came down from Heaven in love to us, to restore us to God's Favour, and Eternal Happiness. What would any ingenuous Person do, who is convinced of this?

Ans. Love him most dearly who so loved us, and thank him most heartily, and intirely, for having done, and suffered so much for our sakes.

Quest. We believe the cause of his dying so painful and ignominious a Death upon the Cross, was not any ill that he had done himself, but only our sins, and that at last they will bring us to Eternal Death, unless we repent of them. What can be expected of all that have this persuasion?

Ans. Irreconcilably to hate sin, and to repent and sin no more, lest they come to feel the same at last intolerably, and that too without all hopes of remedy, in their own Persons. We must *die to sin*, says the Scripture, since he *died for it*, Rom. 6. 6, 8, 11. And if we judge that he *died for us*, his love, as well as our own danger, will constrain us *not to live unto our selves, but unto him that died for us*, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

Quest. We believe that he is now in Heaven at God's right Hand to present our Prayers, and intercede for us, and procure whatsoever we stand in need of. What effect ought this to have upon us?

Ans. Make us look up to him with affiance in his Patronage, and apply to God by him with confidence in all our distresses. *Having such an high-priest now passed into the heavens*, says the Apostle, *let us come boldly unto the throne of grace*, Heb. 4. 14.

Quest. We believe, that as by his Death he purchased, so in Heaven he is now taking up, and preparing Mansions of Eternal Bliss, for all such holy Souls, as, by purity of heart and life, are fit to partake of, and delight in them. What must every Man of this belief do, to be true to his own sentiments?

Ans. Purifie himself, that he may be meet to enjoy, and qualified to relish the immaculate pleasures of that pure, and spotless Place. *Every man, that hath this hope in him, purifies himself, even as he is pure, 1 Jo. 3. 3.*

Quest. We believe that at the last day Christ will judge all men according to their deeds, 2 Cor. 5. 10. Eternally rewarding all who are truly Pious, Humble, Temperate, Just, True, and Peaceable; and eternally condemning all, who are otherwise. What should every Person do in common care and prudence, that is fully persuaded of this?

Ans. Faithfully serve and fear God, who will call him to this strict account. He should be sober, and watch unto prayer, 1 Pet. 4. 5, 7. and be temperate in all things, 1 Cor. 9. 25. and owe nothing, but love, to any man, Rom. 13. 8. and follow peace with all men, and holiness; without which, no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14.

Quest. We believe that the Holy Ghost is ready to assist us in every good act, and to help all, who will use his aid, to be as Holy, as God requires they should be, What would all, that seriously attend to this belief do upon it?

Ans. Obey his motions, and concur with his assistances, and never wilfully do any thing, that will forfeit the aid and influence, of so desirable, and Divine a Guest, as he is. Have, that is, use Grace, that you may serve God acceptably, Heb. 12. 28. Work out your own salvation, for it is God that worketh in you. Phil. 2. 12, 13. and grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, Ephes. 4. 30.

Quest. We believe the communion of Saints, which implies an obedient submission and adherence to our common Rulers, and particularly a communion in Prayers and Sacraments. What would God, or Men expect, from a Person of this belief?

Ans. To keep the unity of the Church, and frequent the publick & Assemblies, where these Saints are to meet, and unite in all Divine Offices.

Quest. So that, to name no more, these Points of Belief already mentioned, if duly attended to, would influence and act on all serious embracers of them, into love of God, and Honour, and godly Fear, and make them rest contented in all estates, and trust God with all Futurities, and have affiance in him in the greatest Difficulties, and

shew

† Heb.
10. 25.

show patience and perseverance under the most tedious Delays, and purifie their Hearts and Lives, and render them universally Righteous as God is, and keep them Holy, and Humble, and Temperate, and Just, and Peaceable, thereby to come off well at the Great Day of Accounts. It would cause them to love, honour, and obey their Saviour *Christ*, and repent truly of all their sins, and put them upon Prayers and Devotions, and keep them in the unity of the Church, and the Publick Assemblies, and make them encourage the Grace of God, and joyn therewith their best endeavours, all which are only the forecited particulars.

Ans. Yes, where a belief of these things is, these fruits may reasonably be expected from it. For they naturally follow on such apprehensions, and accordingly are ascribed to them, and intended to result from them in the Holy Scriptures.

Quest. And as it appears in these, so I suppose it might be made appear, how we are led on by some Points of Belief, to every other Point of Practice?

Ans. It might so, but I judge these to be abundantly enough.

Quest. But although all among us do profess to believe these Principles; yet there are but few who are thus affected with them, or influenced thereby into these practices.

Ans. Too true, alas! But therein they act most unreasonably, and are false to their own persuasions. Whereas, if a Man has a real belief of these things, and will both attend or dwell upon it, and be true to it, following on whither it leads him; in its own natural tendency, and according to all reason, it would affect and influence him, as has been declared. From this Faith, such Fruits are reasonably to be expected; though where Men act out of reason, and either forget themselves, or, to gratifie some unlawful lusts, are willfully false to their own opinions, no such things will follow it.

Quest. If Faith be such a fertile Grace, and so apt to usher in all others; though it be but one in the Root and Cause, yet, in the Fruit and Effect, it will be all Vertues.

Ans.

Ans. Very right, and so it is. What in *Nature*, *Pleasure* and *Pain* are among the *Passions*; that in *Religion*, *Faith* is among the *Graces*, viz. the Source, Root, and Ground-work of all the rest, which are only its different expressions, according to its various Aspects, as it looks several ways, and is conversant about several Objects. For as *Pleasure*, simply offer'd and apprehended, begets *Love*; if offer'd as absent, especially as remote, it turns *Desire*; if as attainable, chiefly when that attainment seems near, it becomes *Hope*; if as attainable surely, *Confidence*: and as *Pain* doth the like, with the *Passions* opposite; So *Faith*, as I have observ'd, when it is of God's Precepts, turns *Obedience*; when of his Threatnings, *Fear* and holy *Awe*; when of his Promises, *Hope* and *Trust*; when the things promised are to be sought of him, it becomes *Prayers* and *Devotions*; when they are delay'd, *Patience* and *Perseverance*; when they are bestow'd and receiv'd, *Thankfulness*; when 'tis of his Providence, it turns *Contentedness*; when of the horrible nature and effects of sin, *Repentance*; when of the spotless rewards of the other World, purification of our Hearts and Lives; when of the last Judgment, universal Innocence, that may stand the trial of it; when of God's Purity and Perfection, Imitation of him, or being Righteous as he is; when of *Christ* the Lord, and his Laws, keeping the Commandments; when of the Holy Spirit, and his assistances, godly Care and good Endeavours; when of the Communion of Saints, keeping Unity in the Church, and attending Publick Ordinances. So that according to several objects, and occasions, this one Principle of Faith transforms it self into all shapes, and becomes all Duties, which are all therefore ascribed to it in the Holy Scriptures. As when it is said *to quench the fiery darts of the wicked*, Eph. 6. 16. *to overcome the world*, 1 Jo. 5. 4. *to purifie the heart*, Act. 15. 9. to be the Grand Parent of all Righteous doings, which are therefore called an *obedience*, or *righteousness of faith*, Rom. 4. 11, 13, & c. 16. 26. And when the good deeds of the best Men, such as *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Moses*, *Daniel*, &c. are attributed to it, Heb. 11.

Quest. And is it from this effecting all Vertues, that it stands invested and adorn'd with all their Claims and Privileges, and that such Promises are made to it when nam-

med

Plea-
igion,
and
erent
looks
jects,
egrets
turns
ment
rely,
fions
is of
reat-
hope
ht of
y are
be-
Pro-
rrible
por-
earts
no-
od's
igh-
aws,
irir,
urs ;
the
ac-
rin-
be-
o it
the
ld,
the
re-
om.
s of
&c.
t it
Pri-
na-
ned

med alone, as are due only to it, and all others in conjunction?

Ans. Yes, such as that thereby we are *the children of God*, Gal. 3. 26. and *abide in the Son, and in the Father*, 1 Joh. 2. 24. and have *Christ dwelling in us*, Eph. 3. 17. That *it justifies us*, Rom. 5. 1. *makes us righteous*, Rom. 10. 10. *gains the remission of sins*, Rom. 3. 25. *saves us*, Job. 5. 24. All which, though they manifestly require Repentance and Obedience, are yet in the places cited ascribed to Faith, because, as opportunity serves, and objects call for them, it is productive of them both.

Quest. You have fully shewed what are those suitable affections, which Faith is to work in us. And thereby I perceive plainly, that Faith with its suitable effects, is the same in other words, with Faith and Repentance, which at first you said was the way for Men to save their Souls. But will not Faith save us, and be imputed unto us for Righteousness, till we are thus affected with it, and act according to our persuasions?

Ans. No, without this it did not save good Men in old Times, nor will now save us.

Quest. The Old Testament Worthies, both before the Flood and after, were accounted *Righteous*, and saved by their Faith, as the Scripture † testifies. But was not Faith accepted of them, unless it thus influenced and affected them? † Heb. 11:

Ans. No, 'tis plain it was not, from the particular accounts of those Worthies.

Quest. Pray make that out in instances, which will be a clear proof in this case.

Ans. First, *Noah became Heir of the Righteousness by Faith*, by believing in a sinful and secure Generation, that God would bring the general Flood upon the World. But that was, when he fear'd, and acted as one so persuaded or being moved with fear, prepared an Ark at God's command, to the saving of his own house from it. By which Fear, and preparation of the Ark upon his Faith, as S. Paul notes, *he condemned the world, and became heir of the Righteousness which is by faith*, Heb. 11. 7.

Again, *Moses was accepted*, for believing the poor *Israelites*, who were then all oppressed slaves in Egypt, to be for all that the *People of God*. But that was, as in pursuance of that belief, *he refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's*

raah's Daughter, the greatest Honour and Worldly good which he had or could propose to himself in Egypt; and chose rather to side, and bear affliction with them. Year further, as at God's command, and in confidence of his Presence with them, he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the King, who, as he must needs think, would be most highly incensed at his carrying away so great a Body of a Laborious, and Drudging People from him, Heb. 11. 24, 25, 26, 27. His Faith is also cried up, for believing God would pass over all the Houses of the Israelites, when he went to slay all the first-born among the Egyptians. But the acceptance of this, as S. Paul notes, was as through that Faith he obey'd God, to keep the Passover, and the sprinkling of blood upon the lintel, and the two side posts of their Doors, which God had made the condition, and

* Exo. 12.

22, 23.

† Exod.

14. 16.

* token of their being preserv'd, verse 28. 'Tis celebrated, lastly, for believing God's † Promise to divide the waters of the red sea, and make them stand as a Wall on either side, till he was passed over. But all the Praise of this belief, was as in virtue of it, he ventur'd himself and all that People; betwixt those Mountains of Waters, and passed through as if it had been dry land, as God directed, verse 29.

* Josh. 2.

9, 10, 11.

Thirdly, The Harlot Rahab was preserv'd as S. Paul, and justified as S. James says, for believing that the * God of Israel was stronger than all Gods, and had given Jericho to the Israelites. But that, as we are expressly told, was only as in pursuance of that belief, she turn'd to that side, which she saw God had espoused, and concealed the spies, and sent them away in peace, James 2. 25. & Heb. 11. 31.

† Act. 7. 2.

* Gen. 12.

1, 2.

Lastly, Abraham, whilst he † dwelt in Mesopotamia, was accepted for believing, that * God would give him another land, wherein he should grow to be a great nation. But that was, when in virtue of that belief, at God's command he left his own country, and obey'd to wander, not knowing whither he went, in search of that Seat and Inheritance, which God had chosen for him, Heb. 11. 8. He was especially justified for believing God, when he promised * to make his Son Isaac a numerous, and blessed people. But this was, as in Power of that Faith he stuck at nothing, but at God's command readily offered him up when he was tryed, accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, to verifie that Promise to him,

* Gen. 15.

5, 6. & c.

31. 12.

Heb.

Heb. 11. 17, 18, 19. His offering up Isaac in virtue of that Faith, fulfilled that Scripture, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for Righteousness, as S. James saith, Jam. 2. 21, 23.

Quest. I see plainly from these instances, that Faith when it had these suitable effects, was the thing which God imputed for Righteousness to the Old Testament Worthies. They were all Righteous through Faith, not while Faith was only an idle belief, and speculative Notion, but when they feared, and acted, as any rational and considerate Man would do under such persuasions. What have you to add more, to shew the same of us Christians?

Ans. The Faith that will avail and save us, we are plainly told, is a Faith that

1. Affects our Hearts, and renews all within us. It must beget Hope and Trust in God, the Devils faith being rejected, because they only tremble at God's Word, and dare not trust it will do them any good, Jam. 2. 19. It must produce Charity, which, says S. Paul, * fulfills the * Rom. Law of the Second Table, and leads us into every other 13. 10. Duty. For Charity is the end of the Law, out of faith unfeigned, 1 Tim. 1. 5. and the Faith which avails to the hope of righteousness, is a Faith which worketh by love, Gal. 5. 5, 6. In summ, lastly, it must cleanse the Heart, whence, as our Saviour observes, * all evil doth procede, * Matth. purging out the Old Man of Pride, Envy, Anger, Lust, 15. 18, 19. &c. and planting therein the New Man of Humble, Pious, Pure, and Vertuous Tempers in its stead: purifying the heart, as S. Peter says, Act. 15. 9. and 1 Pet. 1. 21, 22.

2. Reforms our Practice. The Numbers that believed acceptably, turned unto the Lord, saith S. Luke, Acts 11. 21. The Faith which availeth, worketh by love, says S. Paul, Gal. 5. 6. it overcomes the World, saith S. John, 1 Jo. 5. 4. it makes us free from sin, says our Saviour, Jo. 8. 32. It must carry us on to good deeds, as it did Abraham to leave his country, Heb. 11. 8. and to sacrifice his son, Jam. 2. 21, 22. and as it did Rahab to receive the spies, verse 25. A working Faith, is the only Faith that lives; for faith without works is dead, Jam. 2. 20. as the body without the spirit is dead, so is faith without works dead, verse 26. It is the only Faith that profits; for if a man say he hath faith, and have not works, what doth it profit?

profit ? verse 14. It is the only Faith that saves, and justifies. If a man shows faith without works, can faith save him? Abraham was justified by works, verse 21. and Rahab was justified by works, verse 25. ye see then, how that by works a man is justified together with Faith, and not by faith only, verse 24.

Quest. If there is no Justification by any Faith, but what reforms the heart and practice, I perceive that in the question of Justification, we must no longer oppose Faith and Obedience, but take care to secure both, it being, as S. Paul saith, a *working faith*, or, as S. James, *faith and works* together, that justifies us.

Ans. Very right.

Quest. But doth not S. Paul, when he speaks of our justification, say it is by faith without the deeds of the law? Rom. 3. 28.

Ans. Those deeds are the deeds of the Jewish Law, chiefly such distinguishing ones, as Circumcision, Sacrifices, Jewish Holy-Days, and observing the Mosaic differences of clean and unclean Meats. These, some Zealors for Moses pressed upon the Gentile-Converts in many Churches, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved, Act. 15. 1. And when some started up at Rome, to press the necessity of the same to Justification there, S. Paul opposes all such deeds, and tells them they must not seek to be justified as Jews, but as Christians. So that what he rejects, are Mosaic deeds, or any others under such qualifications, as the Jews obtruded, and cried up for Righteousness.

Quest. Pray what are those?

Ans. First, They set up a mere Humane Righteousness, in outward Acts. This is Righteousness in Civil Courts, where the Judges are Men, who cannot see the Heart, but judge and pronounce according to Overt-Actions. And the Law of Moses being the Law of their Common-Wealth, whose Breaches were triable in their own Courts; they esteemed themselves Righteous in the eye of their Law, as the World doth in case of other Political and State Laws, when they are not liable to be brought in Trouble, or Indicted upon them before any of their own Tribunals. This sense of their Legal Righteousness, was current * among the Doctors. And Josephus, a learned Jew, who lived and flourished in the Apostles own Days

*Vid. Grot.
on Matth.
5. 10.

asserts

asserts it in no less an instance, than that of *Sacrilege*:
 * wondering at Polybius, an otherwise Praise-worthy Wri- * Antiq.
 ter, as he says, for ascribing God's exemplary Vengeance on l.12. c.13.
Antiochus Epiphanes, to his Sacrilege only design'd upon
 the Temple at Elymais. Whereas, says he, If he only in-
 tended, but did not execute and effect it, he did not deserve
 to be punished for it. And accordingly, in S. Paul's ac-
 counts of the Jewish Righteousness, he is careful still to
 call it a * Justification, or Righteousness of works, as con- * Rom. 4.
 sisting only in things brought on to act and practice. 2, 6. & c.
 And measuring themselves thus only by External Acts, 9. 31, 32.
 as cognizable before Humane Courts; the orderly Li- Gal. 2.16.
 vers among them, made no more scruple of asserting their
 own Righteousness in the Eye of their Law, than any
 good Subjects do in pleading their innocence as to the
 Laws of their several Countries. As we find the young
 man did to our Saviour, when he posed him upon the Ten
 Commandments, saying, all these things have I kept from
 my youth up, Matth. 19. 18, 19, 20. And as S. Paul did,
 in setting off his Jewish Confidences, saying, That touch-
 ing the Righteousness, which is in the Law, he was blame-
 less, i. e. not to be blamed before any of their Tribunals,
 Phil. 3. 6.

Quest. But did not some things in the Jewish Law, ex-
 tend to Mens Hearts and Spirits. Particularly among
 the Ten Commandments, is there not One, viz. the Tenth,
 which forbids all inward covering of what is our Neigh-
 bours?

Ans. Yes, but there being no notice taken of these,
 nor punishments inflicted for them in their Courts, the
 Doctors, as may appear from what I have said, looked
 on them rather as Counsels of Perfection, than as strict
 Laws of Righteousness. Or, if as Laws, yet as such
 Laws, the Breaches whereof were sufficiently atoned by
 their Daily, or Annual Sacrifices: which sanctified, as
 S. Paul saith, to the purging of the flesh; i. e. to indem-
 nify them before Men as to their Carnal, Secular In-
 terests; though not to clear them before God, or make
 them perfect as pertaining to the conscience, Heb. 9. 9, 13.

Quest. What other Qualifications did the Jews cry up
 in those Works, which they depended on to make them
 Righteous?

Ans.

Ans. Secondly, Their *merits*. For they set up a proud, boastful Righteousness, which should challenge the reward by way of merit and equivalence: not being content to reap all the Benefit, unless they could also arrogate all the Glory and Honour of it to themselves.

Quest. Whereon could they pretend to erect this?

Ans. On two Foundations. First, The Power of natu-

† *Israel vero persequens Legem iustitia in Legem iustitia non pervenit. Quare? quia non ex Fide, sed tanquam ex operibus: id est, tanquam eam per semetipsum operantes, non in se credentes operari Deum.* August. de Spiritu & Litera. Tom. 3. op. p. 830.—*Judei, quia suis viribus se putabant implere posse iustitiam, offenderunt in Lapidem offensionis & Petram Scandali.* Id. enarrat. in Pl. 30. Tom. 8. op. p. 163. Edit. Froben.

* 2 Cor. 3. 6.

† See Mr. Smith's Discourse on Legal Righteousness, c. 2.

among them, *All things are in the Hand of God, but the fear of God*, to note such absoluteness of our free-will to good, as has nothing to controul it.

Secondly, On the *intrinsic worth* and *value of their own deeds*, making them to deserve Heaven by way of equivalence. They were the great affecters, and aspirers after merits, * saying, That *happiness by way of reward*, is

* See

Mr. Smith, far greater, and more magnificent, than by way of mercy. *ibid.*

† Ro. 11. 6. reward on such deeds, as † excluded grace, and were

* Eph. 2. aimed all for * *boasting*, as S. Paul says of them. And

8, 9. several Rules of estimate and valuation they had, to se-

† Mr. Smith cure this to themselves. † One was, from the number

ib. c. 3. and tale of their good deeds, if they had but done one more

good,

Good, than bad actions, to make their merits preponderate their demerits. Another was, from their weight and importance, if they had either the Skill, or good Fortune, to make choice of such, as God set most by, which might be put in the Scale against several others. Nay, such in their account was the desert of every good work, if they had continued to keep any one of their Six hundred and thirteen Precepts, out of Love to it, and not from any worldly respect, though at the same time the rest were neglected: Or if, when they had nothing else to produce, they could but say, they were the natural Seed of Abraham, (a ground of Jewish confidence tax'd by * S. John the Baptist) and were literally circumcised; they thought there was enough in them to merit the future reward. And being thus unrestrain'd and liberal, in undervaluing what came from God, and over valuing what they did for him: whilst they thus set their own rates, they were sure not to want desert enough for the greatest recompences. Yea, so far, as to make out their common saying, that all Israelites shall have a portion in the world to come. And for all these things, sufficient testimonies are produced by learned Men out of their own Writings.

* Mat. 3:
7, 8, 9.

Quest. So that I perceive the Jewish deeds, set up for Righteousness by their Doctors, were the deeds of their own Law, especially those distinguishing Laws, which were peculiar to themselves. And those, not any secret and spiritual, but only external acts, such as fell under the cognizance of their own Courts of Justice. Which were cried up for Righteousness, as performed in virtue of their own strength, and meriting the reward by their own worth and excellence.

Ans. Very right. And the asserters of such works, must needs be under a great surprise, to hear of Justification by Gospel-duties. Extending not only to Overt-Acts, but to their Hearts, and Spirits; which were to be performed by the help of God's inward Grace; and rewarded through Christ's Merits, and God's merciful Acceptance. And their way of meriting acceptance, by meer external Mosaic works, performed in virtue of their own Free-will and Humane strength, being in all its points a way of their own setting up, but disowned and rejected by God, S. Paul calls their own Righteousness: and opposes to the other, of being esteemed Righteous

teous through *Christ's* Merits, and God's merciful Acceptance, on Faith and Obedience to the Gospel, wrought by the help of God's Grace ; which he calls God's *Righteousness*, and the *Righteousness of Faith*, Phil. 3. 9. & Rom. 10. 3. 5. 6.

Quest. Do the *Apostles*, in their disputes of Justification with the *Jews*, let themselves to bear down these points ?

Ans. Yes, and more especially *S. Paul*, both at *Rome*, and *Galatia*, and other places. For in this matter they declare, how * *by the works of the Law, shall no flesh be justified*, so that the *Gentiles* must not live like *Jews* : but only by *faith and obedience of Christ*, or † *faith working by love*, so that the *natural Jews* must live as *Christians*.

* Rom. 3. 20. † Gal. 2. 14. 15, 16. † Gal. 5. 6. That this *Obedience* avails, when it is not only with the outward, but also with the inward *Man*, containing together with the external Practice, a * *renewal of the*

* Rom. 12. 1, 2. mind, a † *circumcision of the heart and spirit*, and a * *new*

† Rom. 2. 28, 29. creature. That is wrought in us, not through meer

* Gal. 6. 15. humane strength, but thro the internal grace of God, so as

† Gal. 5. 22. to be truly the † *fruit of the Spirit*, and the * *renewal of*

* Tit. 3. 5. the *Holy Ghost*. And that the Gospel offering such inward Grace, is thereupon a † *ministry of the Spirit*, and

† 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7, 8, 9. a *ministration of Righteousness* : but that the Law wanting it, is therefore only an external Revelation, a *ministration of the letter of death, and condemnation*, which seeing it * *could not give the life which it required*, but only an outward direction how to lead it, therefore *Righteousness could not come by it*. That this is counted

* Gal. 3. 21, 22. & c. 5. 5. *Righteousness*, only in virtue of *Redemption by Christ*,

† Rom. 4. 6, 7, 8. & † *Christ being the end of the law for Righteousness*, and we

3. 25. † *being justified through the redemption that is in Jesus*, whose blood is a propitiation for our sins, and * *who is made*

* Rom. 10. 4. † *to us of God redemption and righteousness*. That in him, God accepts and rewards it, not for its own merits, but

† Rom. 3. 24, 25. out of his meer bounty and free grace, without, and infinitely beyond its deserts. We † *being justified freely, by*

* 1 Cor. 1. 30. his grace. And that this way, as God's free Grace is

† Ro. 3. 27. exalted, so all *Jewish* * *boasts* are excluded. Lastly, instead of the *Jewish* barrier and exchange, in weighing

Eph. 2. 8, 9. out good against bad Actions, or Merits against Demerits ;

rits; they tell us, that he who continues to * offend in ^{* Jam. 2.} one point, is as liable to be condemned, though not to so ^{10.} fore a punishment, as he that is guilty of all. And that he, who sincerely endeavours to keep all, after * he has ^{* Luke 17;} done the most, must say he has done no more than his duty, ^{10.} and is still an unprofitable servant. All which, with sundry others, every where observable by any careful peruser of the *Apostolical Writings*, are directly levelled against the fore said *Jewish Tenets*.

Quest. And such *Jewish Deeds*, you say, are the deeds of the law, which S. Paul opposes, *Rom. 3. 28.*

Ans. Yes.

Quest. Indeed the *Apostles* Disputation there of *Justification*, is evidently against the *Jews*.

Ans. Yes, and the way whereby they sought to be justified, was by the *Law of Moses*. That they cried up, as the great Rule, and Dispensation of Righteousness, and Perfection: they stumbled, as he declares, at that stumbling stone, *Rom. 9. 31, 32.* And they looked to be justified by it, in virtue and merit of their own works, as I have shew'd, not through the merit of *Christ's Sacrifice*, and the Grace of God pardoning their Offences: which made S. Paul declare to all, who would be justified by the Law, that *Christ* was become of none effect to them, and that they were fallen from grace, *Gal. 5. 2, 4.*

Quest. But is it clear that he speaks of such *Jewish deeds*?

Ans. Yes, because, as I say, such were set up by the *Jews*, against whom he argues. Nay, as he adds, they were such, as would make it necessary for all Men to turn *Jews*. For that way, says he, God would be the God of the *Jews* only, and not of the *Gentiles*, verse 29. Besides, they are such Works, as are a ground of * ^{* Eph. 2;} boasting, verse 27. and make the reward reckoned out of ^{8, 9.} debt or desert, without grace, or being beholden for it, *Rom. 4. 4.* excluding grace, as being inconsistent with it, *Rom. 11. 6.* And so the *Jews* believed, and taught of theirs, accounting Heaven a just and deserved Wages for their Works, without any need of Redemption by *Christ's Sacrifice*, as I have already shewed.

Quest. And S. Paul, though he denies such *Jewish Works*, yet withall asserts Works after the *Christian Faith*, wrought in us by God's Grace, and accep-

red through *Christ's Sacrifice*, to justify and make us Righteous?

Ans. Yes, in the very same Verse, wherein he rejects *the Law of works*; that is, *Jewish works*, he declares we are justified by *another Law*, viz. *the Law of Faith*, in performing what it imposes, *Rom. 3. 27.* And the Faith, which *avails to Righteousness in Christ Jesus*, he says, is a *working Faith*, *Gal. 5. 6.* And the same *S. Paul*, speaking of the Faith, which justified the Ancient Worthies, particularly notes those correspondent Affections and Practices, which it produced in them to make them Righteous. As *Noah's holy fear*, and *obedience in building of the Ark*, though all the while he was laughed at for his pains, by a merry and secure World; and *Moses's quitting the highest hopes and honours of Egypt*, to associate with the persecuted People of God; and *Abraham's leaving his Country*, and *sacrificing his Son* at God's Command; and all the other instances above-mentioned.

Quest. By what you have said, I plainly perceive, that a working Faith, or a Faith that suitably influences and affects us, is the Faith which always did, and always must recommend Men to Almighty God. Which, when the Scripture contents it self barely to imply the effects, it simply calls Faith; when it would speak out, and express both, it calls Faith and Repentance.

Ans. Very right.

Quest. But since all Faith doth not achieve these noble feats, and all Graces do not grow upon this single stock in all Believers; Pray what are the great Properties, that fit Faith for these effects, and distinguish the Faith of those who show these Fruits, from the Faith of those that want them?

Ans. They are reducible, I think, to these Two the *sincerity*, and the *strength* of it.

Quest. What mean you by the *sincerity* of this Faith?

Ans. First. That it be *real and unfeigned*. Not a meer pretence of Faith, under which *Infidels* may disguise, themselves among Christians, to be trusted or employed.

Nor

Nor a meer outside profession, which unthinking Men may chuse and put on, as they do their Cloathes, without looking for any further reason, than to be in the fashion; and which they can as easily and readily alter again, as they do their Habir, when the Mode shall turn: But a real, inward belief and perswasion. It is an *unfeigned Faith*, that S. Paul commends in *Timosky*, 2 Tim. 1. 5. and an *unfeigned Faith*, out of which flows *charity*, 1 Tim. 1. 5. and the Faith or *Wisdom*, which makes Men *pure and peaceable*, &c. says S. James, is *without Hypocrisie*, Jam. 3. 17. So that they are never like to be fruitful Believers, who follow *Jesus*, as some *Jews* did, only to run in with the Croud, or for the sake of the *Loaves*, more than out of inward Convictions.

Secondly, That it be *Heartly and Affectionate*. Not a meer speculative Opinion, and careless Notion, as of things wherein we are not much interested: but a moving and influencing perswasion, wherewith all the powers of the Soul are affected. Our Opinions must form our Passions, and advance into *Love, Desire, Hope, Fear, Care, Endeavour*, and the like, according to the different nature and power of the things believed. The belief that *saves*, says S. Paul, is a Belief *with the heart*, as well as with the head, *Rom. Ro. 9.* And the Faith, which *avails to Righteousness, worketh by love*, Gal. 5. 5, 6. And therefore they are never like to prove fruitful Believers, who read and credit the Story of *Jesus*, and the things of Christianity, as they would the Story of *Cesar* or *Alexander*, of the *Assyrian* or *Persian Empire*, as things that are very remote in *Place*, or *Time*, and, being of little concern to them, do not much either delight, or afflict them. Such indifferent and unconcern'd Believers, are like to make no better than *Christian News-mongers*, whose Christian Faith furnishes them only to talk and tell stories.

Quest. Besides this sincerity, is it necessary to a *saving and effective Faith*, that there be moreover a good degree of strength and *firmness* in it?

Ans. Yes, for such a strong Faith it was, that made *Abraham*, and other *Holy Men*, obey God, whereupon they were accepted. *Abraham*, says the Scripture, *was not weak or sickly, but strong in Faith, whereby they gave glory unto God*, Rom. 4. 19, 20. The Faith that fits us

for Christian Privileges, and the Blessings of *Baptism*, as *Philip* told the *Eunuch*, is a belief with all the heart, *Act*. 8. 37. If good Fruits do not spring from Faith, it is because there is but little of it; why take ye thought, O ye of little faith? *Math*. 6. 30. & 8. 26. Or because there is very small, or no life in it, Faith being as dead, as the body is without the spirit, when it stands alone, and no vital motions or effects stream from it, *Jam*. 2. 17, 20, 26.

Quest. I perceive this strength of Faith, is necessary to enable it to do its work, and to conquer all that doth oppose it. But in what doth this strength consist?

Ans. In three things especially. 1. That it be *assured* and *confident*. 2. That it be *honest*, or seated in one who makes conscience of being just to his word. 3. That it be *resolute*.

Quest. Must the Faith, that produces these suitable effects, be *assured* and *confident*?

Ans. Yes for a wavering Opinion will not accomplish its work. It must make us forego many grateful things, and undergo many ungrateful ones, and attempt many that are very difficult and laborious. And Men will not run these ventures, and bear these losses, on uncertain hopes, but only on firm and certain expectations. And therefore right and acceptable Believers, are exhorted to draw near to God with full assurance of faith, and to hold fast their profession without wavering, *Heb*. 10. 22, 23. and to shew diligence, to the full assurance of hope to the end, *Heb*. 6. 11. An half Faith, makes such Believers to be like *King Agrippa*, only half and almost Christians, *Act*. 26. 28.

Quest. Must it also be *honest*, that is, have a good Conscience accompanying it, and be seated in one, who is careful to be just to his word?

Ans. Yes, as it implies the owning of Doctrines and Propositions, so it leads to ingage in Promises and Undertakings, the good performance whereof includes not only Understanding and Knowledge, but also Honesty and a good Conscience. So that a fruitful Faith must not be a bare skilfulness in Opinion, but also a trustiness and integrity in discharging a Profession. It effects Obedience only in just and upright tempers, that make Conscience to perform their promises, to fulfil their pretences, and

and answer all just expectations. Among all those several sorts of *bearers*, by whom it was *received*, the word believed brought forth fruit only in an honest and good heart, as our Lord himself notes, *Luke 8. 15.* And to draw us near to God, with a full assurance of faith, we must joy in a true heart, and a clean conscience, *Heb. 10. 22.* and the charity, which the Law requires, flows then only from an unfeigned faith, when 'tis accompanied with a pure heart, and a good conscience, *1 Tim. 1. 5.* And therefore in *Simon Magus* it bore no Fruit, because his heart was not right in the sight of God, *Act. 8. 13, 21.* So that we must not wonder, if we see a true Faith prove barren, and producing no obedience, in a dishonest, and false Man. Since it is not faith alone, but Honesty that must make a Man careful to remember, and perform his undertaking, and false unjust Persons, how right soever they may be in their belief and apprehensions, will be as like to break their word with God, as they are with their Neighbours.

Quest. Must it also, lastly, be resolute, and fully fixed after all things are well considered: That so, when any hardships arise in the way of Faith, we may not be soon staggered in mind, and put to deliberate anew, whether or no to go on in it?

Ans. Yes, when they want this resolvedness, Men are not like to hold on in a way of difficulties, and such do every where occur in Faiths race. Every true Believer must have cast up all the cost, and pains of his way beforehand, as our Saviour tells us in the Parables of the wise builder, and of the king going to war, *Luke 14. 28, 31.* They must stand prepared to run all hazards, and sustain all losses, setting Faith above all things else, and resolving to stick to it, whatever prove its trials and discouragements. And such Believers as these, the Scripture calls grounded, and settled in the faith, *Col. 1. 23.* and rooted, built up, and established in it, *Col. 2. 7.* And the believers, or receivers of the word, who fell off in tribulation, are said to have had no root in themselves, *Matth. 13. 21.* A deliberate resolution is a sure Ground-work, and what is built on that may be like to stand a Storm, and after all the Assaults which are made upon it, remain unshaken.

Quest. So that the Faith, whereon all the fore-mentioned Fruits are like to grow, must not be a meer pretence of Faith, but sincere and undissembled; it must not be an empty profession, and formal out-side, but inward in the apprehension of the mind; it must not be a wavering Opinion, but confident, and well assured; it must not be a speculative, cool, and unmoving Notion, but hearty, concerning, and affectionate; it must not be in a careless, forgetful, and failing, but in a conscientiously careful, just, and performing Man; it must not act on an irresolute heart, which will be easily daunted, or soon staggered, but one, who upon good reason, and after due deliberation, is fully fixt, and resolved to follow it.

Ans. Yes, the Faith that influences the Heart and Life, and stands in all times and trials, must be thus qualified. And the Faith, which is either dissembled, formal, wavering, unaffecting, careless, or irresolute, some one or other of which the Faith of all Sinners is, is like to have no such Blessed Fruits proceeding from it: As *Simon Magus's* had nor, whose *heart was not right*; nor *Agrippa's*, whose Faith was but *almost*; nor the Temporary Believers, whose *faith fell away because it wanted root*. So that these different attendants, and various qualifications of Faith, make the difference in its Fruits and Effects, and distinguish the Faith of Saints from the Faith of Sinners.

Quest. It has been often said of Faith by some, that it is an act of *Recumbency*, or *leaning and rolling our selves on Christ for Salvation*. Are such Phrases applicable to Faith in a *literal*, and *common* understanding of them?

Ans. No, for Faith is an act of our Spirits, and though Bodies lean and rest on Bodies, yet Spirits have none of these Bodily Gestures and Affections. When such words are used in expressing *mental* acts, they are *Metaphors*, which are applied to them on account of some *Similitude* and *Resemblance*?

Quest. What acts can the Faith of a Man's mind exert about a Person, which may answer these forms of *recumb-ing*, or *leaning* upon him?

Ans. Either Believing some Doctrine which he reaches, or relying on some Promise which he makes. These may be set off by the acts of recumbent, leaning, and rolling. For as these are ways of Bodies resting, and depend-

depending; so are those of a Man's mind's doing the same upon any Person. They acquiesce and rest on his Truth and Knowledge, in what he says; and on his Fidelity, in what he promises: which gives them the same ease and settlement, as the acts of rolling, leaning, and recumbent do to Bodies.

Quest. Faith is also called by some, the *hand of the Soul*, that reaches at, and apprehends and applies Christ's Merits. What is there in this Spiritual Grace, that can answer these expressions?

Ans. Reaching at them, is assenting to some Propositions about them. And laying hold of and applying them, is consenting and complying with some Overtures, or fulfilling some terms and conditions, whereby they become our own. Putting out these mental acts, has the same effect and use to our Souls, as stretching out the hand to apprehend and apply things to our Bodies, that is, to bring the thing desired down to our selves.

Quest. So that to roll and lean upon Jesus Christ, is in plain English only to believe what he says, and to rely upon what he promises. And to apprehend, or lay hold on Christ, and apply his Merits, in clearer and more intelligible Language, is only to fulfil the Gospel terms, or to have Faith with its fore-cited effects, that is, to believe and repent, whereby his benefits become ours.

Ans. Yes, that I take to be the true meaning and explication of these obscure Phrases. I confess I am a great lover of plain, and intelligible Speech. And above all things else I love to hear Men speak plain in the great Truths of Religion, and Points of Salvation, wherein there is the most need of all to inform, and edifie Men's understandings. And therefore I heartily wish these dark, and intricate words were less used, or wholly laid aside in these important matters, they being words of Mens invention, which the Holy Scripture nowhere uses about them, and such words too, as I am sure do more amuse, than instruct those that hear them. But if any think fit still to use them, or meet with Faith set off by them in Books or Discourses, this, and no more in a true sense, and in plain intelligible English, I think is the meaning of them.

Quest. If Faith in Christ be a Faith in his Word, then it is no part of Faith for any Man to believe his sins are pardoned,

pardoned, nor of *Infidelity* to doubt of it, because particular Men have no word of his for that?

Ans. Very right. He tells us in the *general* that he will pardon Penitents; but in his Word he has not descended to tell particular Men that they are truly Penitent, having reserved that to be declared at the *last judgment*. Besides, every Man must have true *Faith* before he can be pardoned, *Faith* and *Repentance* being the conditions of Pardon. But no Man must believe his sins are pardoned before they are pardoned, since that were plainly to believe a falsehood.

Quest. But since all doubting of the Pardon of our Sins, and the Favour of God implies *distrust*, how will it stand with *Faith in God*?

Ans. The belief that our Sins are pardoned, implies our trust and confidence of two things. One is, of God's Power and Fidelity, in fulfilling his Promises. The other is, of the sufficiency of our own care, in performing his Terms. Now Faith being a Faith in God, not in our selves, implies, trust, and confidence only in the former of these.

Quest. Is Faith only a confidence, and trust in God, not in our selves, and implies a good opinion only of his Power and Faithfulness, but not of our own fitness?

Ans. Yes, and so of Abraham it is said, when he believed, That he gave glory to God, Rom. 4. 20. His Faith consisted, as the Apostle notes, in what regarded him: he being counted righteous for believing, that what God had promised, he was fully able to perform, verse 21. When once Men have the greatest assurance of those Divine Properties, they are said to have the greatest Faith, though at the same time they think meanly, and are most distrustful of themselves. So the good Centurion was, having such confidence in Christ's Power, that he thought a word of his mouth would recover his Son, without giving him the trouble to come in person: and at the same time thinking so meanly of himself, that he judged his house unworthy to receive him. And of this Christ declares, I have not found so great faith, no not in Israel, Matth. 8. 8, 10.

Quest. I perceive 'tis no part of any Man's Faith, to believe his sins are pardoned, nor of Infidelity to doubt of it. But though such doubts are not the sin of *Infidelity* against

against God, yet are they not always *sinful*, and *blame-worthy* upon some other account?

Ans. No, but oft-times expressions of vertue, and serve to recommend us the more to God; as being acts of humility and self-abasement, of modesty and poverty of Spirit, which set no Man further off, but bring him nearer, and interest him the more in his favour. The fearful humble Publican, who durst not presume on any favour, but *wish dejected eyes stood afar off, went home justified of God*, rather than the proud Pharisee, who *justified himself*. Upon which our Saviour adds, that *every one, who exalts himself, shall be abased; and every one, that humbleth himself, shall be exalted*, Luke 18, 10. to 15. God is nigh, saith the Psalmist, *to the broken of heart, and contrite of spirit*. Plal. 34. 18. He dwells with the contrite, and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and revive the heart of the contrite ones, *Isaiah* 57. 15. He looks to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at his word, *Isaiah* 66. 2. to lift up those, that humble themselves in his sight, *James* 4. 10. and to bless the poor in spirit, *Matth.* 5. 3. Indeed, dejection, sadness, and tormenting fears, are a backner of good endeavours; and accuse God, as if he were an hard, uncomfortable Master, very difficult to please; and Religion, as if it were a lowre, melancholy service: so that faithful hearts must not affect, or harbour fear to these degrees. But when they maintain a comfortable hope, 'tis generally more commendable to lean to the side of humble fear, than of arrogant self-flattery, to be too lowly and modest, rather than too presumptuous and boasting.

Quest. And is it not more safe too?

Ans. Yes, fear begets care, whereas security slackens watchfulness, and abates endeavour. And therefore the Apostle advises those, who would expect to stand, *not to shrink highly, but fear*, *Rom.* 11. 20. and to work out their salvation with fear, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. And he was a wise Man who said, *Happy is he that feareth alway, but he that hardneth his heart against fear, shall fall into mischief*, *Prov.* 28. 14. The wisest, and the best way generally is to be fully assured of what concerns God, but fearful and jealous of what depends upon our selves.

Quest.

*Gal. 5. 22.

Psal. 37

37.

† Rom.

15. 13.

Quest. But have not some good Men, great confidence of God's favour? And since that is the privilege of the most consummate Saints, and gives the greatest * *peace* and † *joy in God*, and *comfort in believing*, which the Scripture speaks of: must it not be a most justifiable, as it is really a most blessed and desirable thing?

Ans. Yes, if their confidence is not beyond their grounds; and if under this comfortable assurance of their present claim to Happiness, they at the same time preserve an humble sense of their own defects and unworthiness, and a fear of their falling from it by after-failures. And this comfortable assurance is vouchsafed to some extraordinary good Souls, as their special privilege; as fears and doubts are continued to others, for their exercise. And different persons are either indulged more happy enjoyment from God, or so exercised as to make them more acceptable and dear to him, both these ways.

Quest. You have said enough to explain the *nature*, and to set off the *excellency* and *usefulness* of *Faith*. But lest after we have taken the pains to walk by it, it should fail all our expectations in the end; pray show me something of the *certainty* of it.

Ans. That depends on the *Authority of Jesus Christ*, who is the *Author* of our Faith. And all must needs be true that he says; and sure that he Promises; because he is the *true Messiah*, or the *Christ of God*, who was to come as his *Great Prophet*, to make known his mind unto the *World*.

C H A P. II.

That Jesus is the Christ, from Ancient Prophecies.

The Contents:

Among those Prophecies, which prove Jesus to be the Christ, First, Some prescribe the time of his coming. This they mark out by the nearness of such notable Occurrences, and Revolutions, as would fall under all Mens observation. And by fixing the very Year which he should appear in. Accordingly there was a general expectation of him at that time. His coming not put off beyond the time appointed, for the sins of the People. An account, why the Jews, who read these clear Notes of the time in their own Prophets, are not convinced by them. Secondly, Others assign many peculiar, and visible Notes, whereby he may be demonstratively pointed out from all other Men. As,

- 1. His being born of a Virgin. This in some sense spoken of a Virgin of that time, but principally of Messiah, and then only fully accomplished, when Jesus came. This cleared from exceptions.*
- 2. His having the Spirit of Miracles, resting on him.*
- 3. His Death, with the particular manner, and circumstances of it. And his returning to Life again.*
- 4. His putting an end to the Jewish Sacrifices and Mosaic Covenant, and bringing in a New one, and a better to supply its defects.*
- 5. His erecting an Universal Empire, and appearing as a mighty King. This not a Secular, but Spiritual Kingdom.*
- 6. His converting the Heathen World, from their Idol-worship. Jesus silenced the Oracles, and cast the impure Spirits out of their Temples. This an Argument for him, not only as accomplishing a Prediction, but also as 'tis plainly a Divine thing. The Prophecies of an Universal Probitiy, and Peace under Messiah, cleared up, by an account both of their meaning, and accomplishment. The fore-cited Prophecies understood of Messiah by the Ancient Jews, though denied by some later in hatred to our Jesus.*

Quest.

Question. **H**OW doth it appear, that Jesus, who was born of *Mary*, and suffered under *Pontius Pilate*, is the *Christ*?

Ans. First, From ancient Prophecies. Secondly, From undoubted Divine Testimonies other ways.

Quest. Doth this appear from ancient Prophecies?

Ans. Yes, and by these *S. Paul* endeavour'd to convince the *Jews* at *Rome*, persuading them concerning *Jesus*, both out of the *Law of Moses*, and out of the *Prophe- cies*, *Act.* 28. 23.

Quest. How do these Prophecies demonstrate him?

Ans. Two ways. 1. By prescribing the exact time of his coming. 2. By assigning many peculiar, and most visible Notes, whereby he may be demonstratively pointed out from all other Men.

Quest. How do they prefix the exact time for *Messiah's* coming?

Ans. By sundry notable, and publick turns and occurrences, which would be remarked by all, and in judging whereof they could not be mistaken.

Quest. I pray you name them.

Ans. 1. They say he shall come before the People of the *Jews* shall cease to be a Nation, and a Body Politick: which now they are ceased to be, having no Country, or Common-wealth, which they can call their own, but for above 1600 years, ever since the destruction of *Jerusalem*, living scatter'd, and dispersed in every Country and Kingdom. And this notable alteration, which all the World must observe, because thereby it lost a Nation that bore a great name, and, by using most appropriate and separate rites, made a peculiar Figure among them, is expressly set out by the *Patriarch Jacob*, as a sign to follow the coming of *Messiah*. The Scepter shall not depart from *Judah*, nor a Law-giver from between his feet, that is, the Nation of the *Jews*, denominared from *Judah*, shall not cease to have Government among them as a Civil State, and the Benefit of their own Laws, till *Shilo* come, *Gen.* 49. 10.

Quest. What other notable sign do they give of this time?

Ans.

Ans. Secondly, They say his coming shall be, whilst the *second Temple* is yet standing; which has been ruined and demolished, ever since the City was destroyed by *Titus Vespasian*. The Lord whom you seek, the messenger of the covenant, shall suddenly come to his temple, saith God by *Malachi*, Mal. 3. 1. And of the *second Temple*, says he again by *Haggai*, I will shake all nations, and the desire of all Nations shall come, and fill this house with glory, that is, with the Glory of his Presence, Hag. 2. 7. This presence of *Messiah* in resorting to it, was that, which was to make the glory of this later house, greater than the glory of the former house, verse 9. It was much inferior to it, in respect of the Magnificence of Building; Is it not in your eyes, who have seen the glory of the former house, says God, in comparison of it, as nothing? verse 3. And when the Priests, and Levites, and Fathers, that were ancient Men, and had seen the first house, saw the Foundation of it laid, whilst others, who had not seen the former, shouted for joy, they wept, remembering the disproportion, Ezra 3. 12. And under it Five noble privileges, (viz. the Ark of the Covenant, whence God gave * Responses by audible Voices; the † *Urim and Thummim*, that Oracle for the miraculous Instruction of the High-Priest, when he consulted God on any State Concern; the * fire from heaven upon the altar, to consume the Sacrifice; the † *Schechinah*, or Divine Presence in the Holy of Holies, by a visible Glory and appearance upon the * Mercy-seat; and the Holy Ghost in the Spirit of Prophecy, which, though it did many under the former, inspired none under this House;) as the Jewish Writers observe, were all withdrawn. But notwithstanding it had the disadvantage in all these eminent respects, yet the presence of *Messiah* in it, was to give such a lustre to it, as in the Judgment of God himself would make it more Glorious.

* Exod. 25. 21, 22.
† Num. 27. 21.
* Lev. 9. 23, 24.
† 1 King. 8. 11. &
Pf. 80. 1.
* Lev. 16. 2

Quest. Do they mention any other Sign, that visibly marks out this time?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, That it shall be shortly before the destruction of the Temple, and of the City *Jerusalem*, and the utter desolation of the Jewish Nation. For so the Prophet *Daniel* declares, that at the end of a set number of weeks, *Messiah* shall be cut off, and then the people of the prince that shall come, that is, the Romans who should

in-

Ans.

invade them, shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary, and the end thereof shall be with a flood; viz. of Romans overpowering them, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined, that is, by that time this War ends, the desolation of the miserable Jews shall be consummated, *Dan. 9. 26.* Yea, to this he adds another most conspicuous sign, viz. that after *Messiah* was once come, the *Sacrifices of the Law* should all cease among them. *Seventy weeks*, says the Angel, are determined upon thy people, to anoint the most holy, and to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, that is, in the † usual Phrase of Scripture, and of the Jews, of *sin-offerings* or *sacrifices for sins*, which were to pass off when once *Messiah*, by the Sacrifice of himself, had fulfilled all that was typified by them, *verse 24.* And this has been most notoriously verified upon them. For by their Law, they were to have but one Altar, and were to * bring all their sacrifices from all places of the Land, to the temple in *Jerusalem*; and so were never to worship God with Sacrifice, when they were out of their own Nation. And accordingly, they have never sacrificed at all since they were driven out of their own Country, and both the Temple, and City were laid waste by *Titus Vespasian*, which happened within forty Years after the offering up of our Saviour *Christ* in his Crucifixion.

† Lev. 4. 3.
25, 29. &
5. 6. &
Psal. 40. 6.
in all
which for
sin offer-
ing the
Septua-
gint use
ἀμαρτία.
& 2 Cor.
5. 21.
* Deut. 12.
11, 13, 14.

Quest. All these signs are so publick and conspicuous, as must needs force themselves upon all Mens observation. And being all near the time, they sufficiently direct Men when about to look for this Great Person, But are there no Predictions more punctual in point of Time still, and that prefix the exact Year of his coming?

Ans. Yes, the Prophet *Daniel* foretels the very Year, both of his *Manifestation*, and of his *Death* and *Passion*: that the former should happen 483. and the latter 486 Years after the issuing out of the Decree to rebuild, not the Temple, but the City and the Walls of *Jerusalem*. Know therefore, and understand, saith the Angel, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build *Jerusalem*, unto *Messiah* the Prince, that is, to his manifestation, which begun at his *Baptism*, when he first drew Disciples after him, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks, in all sixty nine Weeks or Sep-

tenaries

tenaries of Years, (opposite to weeks of days mentioned Dan. 10. 2.) which makes Four hundred eighty three Years, at the expiration whereof he should come among them, Dan. 9. 25. This punctually marks out the Year 484. for the Year of his manifestation. And then as for his Passion, that he says shall fall out in the week following, nay, in the middle of the week, that is about three Years and a half after, or in the fourth Year from the manifestation, which will be the Four hundred eighty seventh Year from the granting out the Decree to rebuild Jerusalem. And after the seven weeks, and the threescore and two weeks, that is the sixty nine weeks, are ended, and so the seventieth Week or Septenary of Years is begun, shall Messiah be cut off, verse 26. Yea, he shall be cut off in the middle of that Week. For he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week, that is in the seventieth Week, when he begun his Preaching, whereby many were converted; and in the midst of the week, he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, that is, put an end to all the Jewish Sacrifices, by the Sacrifice of himself, verse 27.

Quest. These Predictions are as express, and determinate in point of time, as can be spoken; but did the Manifestation, and Crucifixion of Jesus, fall out punctually according to this time?

Ans. Yes, as some * learned examiners of time do note, to a Year in both of them. For the command to rebuild Jerusalem, not only the temple, but the street and the wall, as the Prophet specifies it, verse 25. was in the twentieth Year of Artaxerxes, as Nehemiah relates, Neh. 2. 1; 5, 6, 7, 8. There was a Decree; indeed, to rebuild the Temple, given before by * Cyrus, and another by † Darius Hystaspis, and so again by * Artaxerxes Longimanus in the seventh Year of his Reign, as appears by the Book of Ezra. But that for rebuilding the city and wall, which the Prophet is careful to specify here, was not, as Nehemiah expressly says, till the twentieth year of Artaxerxes. Which, after the likeliest, and best grounded * computation, as I

* Lydiat Emend. temp? &c. An account of whose method, and reasons, may be seen in Dr. More's Expos. of Daniel's Visions, on Vif. 4. p. 120; &c.

* Ezra 1. 1, 2, 3.

† Ezra 6. 1, &c.

* Ezra 7. 1, 8, 12, 13; &c.

* Lydiat Emend. temp. p. 69, &c. & Canon Chron. p. 54, &c.

D

think;

† In Mr. *Lydiat's* Calculation of the Worlds Age, a point differently fixed by most Chronologers, whilst they agree in the other Calculations, the twentieth year from the second Ol. 77. is made A. M. 3553.

* See *Lydiat Emend. Temp.* p. 134. & seq.

† According to the *Ara Hispan. in Tom. Council.* though according to the common computation 'tis 45.

* Num. 4. 3.

† For Christ's Baptism in the 19 *Tib.* see *Lydiat Emend. Temp.* p. 168. & seq.

* *Lydiat, ib.* p. 176. & seq. And of all these particulars more largely in his *Recensio & Explicat. Argum. Lib. Emend. Temp.*

think, that begins his Reign in the second Year of the 77 *Olympiad*, fell out in the Year of the World according to † *Helvicus* 3498. Now beginning with this Year, and reckoning 69 Weeks, or 483 Years, the time predicted to expire before *Messiah's* manifestation, the Year ensuing for him to appear in, makes the fourth Year of the 202 *Olympiad*, which is the Year of the World 3981. and the nineteenth Year of *Tiberius*. And this falls to be the thirtieth Year of Christ's Age, according to what I judge the * fairest Account of his Birth, (*viz.* that which fixes it in the third Year of the 195th *Olympiad*, which fell upon the † 41st Year of *Augustus*, and the Year of the World 3952.) and is that very Year of his Life, wherein, after the manner of the *Levites*, who at * thirty years old begun their Service, S. *Luke* says our Lord was † Baptized, and begun his Preaching, *Luke* 3. 21, 23. And reckoning to the 487th Year, the time prefixed for his Passion, it makes the third Year of the 203d *Olympiad*, and the 22d of *Tiberius*, the very Year, according to the seemingly * exactest calculation of times, of our Saviour's Crucifixion. So that the *Apostles* had the greatest reason to declare of Christ's coming, that it was when the fulness of time was come, *Gal.* 4. 4. thereby denoting, not only the most proper Season, but the exact Time and Year, which was predicted of him.

Quest. This is a wonderful exactness in prefixing the time of *Messiah's* coming, which being so punctually fulfilled in *Jesus Christ*, must needs conclude undeniably for him, unless some other pretender appeared in that Year to contest it with him. But since they were so particularly informed about the time, how came it, that as it drew on, the *Jews* were not daily looking for him?

Ans.

Ans. They were all full of expectation, about the time when our Saviour came. For at his Birth, *Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel*, Luke 2. 25. *Anna also at the same time, when she saw him, spoke of him to all those, that looked for redemption in Jerusalem*, verse 38. So full of expectation were the People in those days, that they were ready to give ear to every pretender, running after *Theudas*, and *Judas*, as *Gamaliel* reports, *Acts* 5. 36, 37; and after several others, as is related by * *Josephus*. Nay, so near was their expectation, and so apt were they to fix that Character on some; that if a Man were extraordinary, and of great Name, though he did not pretend to be the *Messiah*, yet of themselves they were ready to surmise it of him. And thus they did of † *John the Baptist*: for when he † Luke 3. appeared to be an extraordinary Person, they sent Priests 15, 16. and Levites to him, to know whether he was the Christ: and he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ, *John* 1. 19, 20. Nay, this expectation they did not keep as a secret among themselves, but boasted of it in all places where they lived, and filled the *Greeks*, and *Romans* with it. An opinion had then prevailed over all the East, grown up to be both old and constant, That God had decreed at that time to raise up one out of *Judea*, to the empire of the world; says *Suetonius* in the * *Life of Vespasian*. * *Suet. in Vesp. c. 41.* So that as the Holy Prophets had given them just reason, both *Jews*, and *Gentiles* were in full expectation of *Messiah*, and then it was that our Saviour *Christ* came. He was manifested ere the Scepter was departed, for in his days, and for some time after, the *Jewish* Nation were a Body Politick, and lived under a form of Government: and while the second Temple stood, for he daily conversed, and taught in it: and ere the City and Temple were destroyed, and thereby their Sacrifices all at an end, which was not till the destruction of *Jerusalem*, almost forty Years after he was Crucified. In summ, he was manifested exactly at the end of the sixty nine Weeks, in the 19th of *Tiberius*, and suffered in the midst of the 70th Week, which fell out in the 22d of *Tiberius*, as the Prophet *Daniel* had punctually fore-told of him. And the days of *Messiah* falling so exactly upon him, and upon no other Person, 'tis undeniably clear that he is the Man.

Quest. But though God expressly promised to send *Messiah* at that prefix'd time, yet might he not put it off for the sins of the People, which rendred them utterly unworthy of so great a Blessing?

Ans. No, for those sins were fore-told at the same time, and yet his coming promised notwithstanding them. † *Isaiah* represents the Men of *Messiah's* Age, as an Infidel, and hard-hearted Generation, that would not believe his report, but hide their faces from him in the extremity of his affliction; * *Jeremy*, as having made void God's former covenant, and therefore needing a second to be introduced by him; † *Malachi*, as having lost even natural affection between Parents and Children, which *Elias* must go before to restore among them; * *Daniel*, as persevering under his appearance to sin on, and provoke God to that height, as would cause him shortly after to cut them off, and destroy both the City, and the Sanctuary, by a most just and terrible Judgment. Nay, so far were the sins of the People, from being an hindrance to his coming in the sight of God, that, as the Prophets plainly declare, they were to be the cause and reason of it. The coming, or anointing of the most holy, says *Daniel*, is to make an end of sins or sin-offerings, and make reconciliation for iniquity, Dan. 9. 24. to offer up his soul an offering for sin, to bear the iniquity of us all, to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, that through his stripes we may be healed, says *Isaiah* 53. 5, 6, 8, 10. His coming was to be for the expiation of sin, to open a fountain to the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin, and for uncleanness, Zech. 13. 1. And coming thus to expiate, and cure sin; there is no more reason to stay him beyond the time, because sin grows strong, than, in the increate of a Disease, to delay the use of Remedies, or stop the coming of the Physician.

Quest. But doth not God say, when he speaks of building up, or exalting any nation, that if they do evil in his sight, he will repent of the good, wherewith he said he would benefit them, Jer. 18. 9, 10.

Ans. Yes, and so he doth in all those Promises, which he makes upon Men's supposed Virtues, and on condition of their good carriage. But the Promise of *Messiah* was absolute, and intended, as appears, on no such pro-

prospect. For God declared he should come among a People full of sin, and instead of being deferred by their wickedness, should be sent because of it, to atone and heal it. Besides, if only the Fathers sins had stopped his coming, their Posterities Repentance would have removed that impediment, and have brought him down; which they see for above this 1600 Years, it has not done.

Quest. I see the antient Prophecies declare *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, by prefixing the exact time of his coming: wherein they are so particular, and punctual, as might suffice in an History of things already passed. But I pray before you leave this point, of the exactness of time, how can the *Jews*, who believe all these Prophecies shut their Eyes against them?

Ans. The elder *Jews*, who lived before *Christ*, did see them, as appears from their general expectation of him about that time, and from what the learned * *Grotius* relates of *Rabbi Nehumias*, who living fifty Years before *Jesus Christ* came, declared, that within fifty Years *Messiah* must come, because in that time *Daniel's Weeks* prefixt for him were to determine. But as for the later *Jews*, who lived since our Saviour, they turn by all of them by one rule, whereby at their pleasure they may turn by any thing, that is, by not meddling at all with them, nor suffering any to interpret, or collect the time of his coming from them. This is the meaning of that severe *Anathema*, which * some have noted from the *Thalmud*, *Let his puffed up Bones burst, that shall meddle in computing the periods of times.* And accordingly the rule of the great *Maimonides*, their second *Moses*, concerning the days of *Messiah*, is, *to believe surely that he will come, and if he prove slow, still to expect him, and never to fix him any time, or so to explain any Texts of Scripture, as to infer the time of his appearance from them.*

* *De Verit.*
l. 5. c. 14.

* *Vid. Episcop. Institut. l. 3. c. 5.*

Quest. That indeed, is a clear reason; for the plainest words can never convince those, who will not read, or understand them. But besides that the antient Prophecies prove *Jesus* to be *Christ*, by prescribing the exact time of his coming, you said also that they demonstrate it further, by assigning many peculiar, and most visible notes, whereby he may be demonstratively pointed out from all other Men. What are those peculiar, and notable marks, whereby they so effectually describe him?

Ans. They are certain eminent, and most observable things, *belonging to him*, or *to be performed by him*, which, as they were most *visible* in him, so were *peculiarly* his, and never found in any other Man.

Quest. What things are those, which were so notable in him, and peculiarly belonging to him?

Ans. Not only that he should be born of the *lineage of David*, *Isaiah* 11. 1, 10. and in the *city of Bethlehem*, *Mic.* 5. 2. which, especially in conjunction with the exact time before-described, are very discovering circumstances, to the time when, adding the very Family, and Place where he should be born, that all might know the very Town, and Kindred, amongst whom in that Year they were to seek for him. But more particularly, that he should be set off by these signs following?

Quest. What are they?

Ans. First, That he should be born of a *Virgin*, which was a thing never known before, or since, and so was sure to point him out demonstratively from all other Men. *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son*, saith God by the Prophet *Isaiah*, and shall call his name *Immanuel*, *Isaiah* 7. 14.

Quest. But the word, which is there rendred *Virgin*, say the Jews, may signifie only a *young Woman*, denoting her *Age*, not *Condition*: and then this having in it nothing peculiar, can be no proof to him?

Ans. It doth not appear that it signifies any thing else in Scripture, but a *Virgin*, the * place alledg'd for a larger sense, well admitting that interpretation. But if it did, it must needs signifie a *Virgin*, that is, one *that has not known man*, in this place. For not only the *Septuagint*, that were all *Jews*, and lived long before our Saviour, translate it *Virgin*: but this conception is here given for a *sign*, or a miraculous thing; which would be none at all, were it spoken only of a *young Woman*; especially among the *Jews*, * whose custom it was most early to contract their Daughters, and Marry them, as soon as their Age would suffer them. When *Achaz* refused to tempt the Lord in asking a sign, the Lord himself, says *Isaiah*, shall give you a sign. *Behold! a virgin shall conceive, &c.* *verse* 12, 14.

Quest. This shews it was spoken of some *Virgin*. But yet may it not be understood, as the *Jews* say, of some one,

* Prov. 30.
18, 19.

* Vid Seld.
x. Heb. 1.
2. c. 3.

one, that only was a Virgin at the time of the Prophet's speaking, who before she could lose her Virginity, conceive a Son, and the Child come to any understanding, God would work the deliverance which they desired of him, as the *Prophet* declares, *verse 16.*

Ans. There is cause to think that it was spoken of some such Person, who was present before the Prophet, and pointed out by him, at the time of this Prediction. For in the *Original*, it is not Behold a Virgin, but *that Virgin shall conceive*, as if he had particularly marked out the Person to them. And before the child to be born of her, shall know how to refuse the evil, and chuse the good, the land that thou abhorrest, saith he, shall be forsaken of both her kings, that is, of * *Rezin king of Syria, and of Pekah king of Israel*, who at that time were their invaders. And this accordingly came to pass. For in the *twentieth Year* from the beginning of *Jotham's* Reign, whereof sixteen were elapsed before *Achaz* came to succeed him, and which therefore must fall within two, or three whole Years at most from the time of this Prediction, in which space, the Child but then conceiv'd could not be grown up to Years of understanding, *Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria*, slew *Rezin*, and *Hoshea* slew *Pekah*, as we read *2 Kings* 15. 30, 32, 33. & 16. 9. But although, as I say, this Prophecy had some respect to a Virgin of that time, yet did it look beyond her to a Virgin, that remaining such, should conceive *Messiah*, and was never fulfilled till he came. * Verse 1.

Quest. How doth it appear, that it was not fulfilled in the Virgin pointed out at that time?

Ans. Because the most noted things in that Prophecy, were left unaccomplished then, particularly these following :

First, The conceiving of this Virgin, is made a *miraculous* conception, and is given to the House of *Judah* for a *sign*, as I noted, *verse 11. 12, 14.* And this must be meant of her conceiving, remaining still a Virgin, For, for one that is now a Virgin, to Marry, and after that to conceive, is no miraculous, nor strange thing.

Secondly, The Child *Immanuel*, to be born of this Virgin, was to be *Master of the land of Judah*, which the Prophet therefore calls *thy land*, O *Immanuel* ! *Isaiah* 8. 8. And this was not fulfilled in the Virgins Child of that

time. That Child the *Jews* make to be *Achaz's Son*, viz. *Hezekiah*, who was afterwards *King of Judah*. But he was born several Years before this Prophecy, which cannot therefore speak of conceiving him. For the Prophet is expressly said to come with this Message to *king Achaz*, verse 1, 3. a clear evidence of its falling some time in his Reign. Now he reigned sixteen years in *Jerusalem*, 2 Kings 16. 2. and then left *Hezekiah* his Son to succeed him. And *Hezekiah*, says the Scripture, was twenty five years old, when he began to reign, 2 Kings 18. 2. So that he must needs have been eight or nine Years old, when his Father *Achaz* ascended to the Throne. The Child here promised then, could not be *Hezekiah*, who was afterwards King; but very probably was the Prophets own Son, who lived and died a private Man: so that this part, of being Master of the Land of *Judah*, could not be fulfilled in him.

Quest. Had the Prophet a Son born to him presently after that time?

Ans. Yes, and that, 'tis like, by a Virgin, whom, at the time of his Prediction, he either had espoused, or designed to espouse to himself. *I went in unto the Prophetess*, saith he, proceeding on still in the same Prediction, and she conceived, and bare a son, *Isaiah* 8. 3.

Quest. But how doth this Son appear to be the same *Immanuel*, that was promised to be born of a Virgin? Chap. 7.

Ans. First, Because he has the same Name. By which I do not mean, that he was noted by the same word, but by one that implies what the other expressed, and signifies the same with it, which is the same Name in Scripture account. For the *Virgins son*, chap. 7. was to be called *Immanuel*, that is, *God with us*, to note God's Favour and Presence, verse 14. And the Prophet is ordered to call his Son *Maher shalal hash baz*, that is, one born to speed on the spoil, and hasten the prey, chap. 8. 3. And this, though a different word, has the same virtue and effect with the other. For when a People are in any

† Chap 7.
1.

distress by Invaders, as the *Jews* were at the † time of this Promise, the effect of God's Favour and Presence, is to give them Conquest, and Spoil over their Enemies. And this answering the virtue and effect of a Name, is called the having that Name in Scripture. Thus it is frequent-

frequently in the Holy Prophets, as in (a) *Isaiah*, (b) (a) *Ilsa.* 1. *Jeremy*, (c) *Ezekiel*, (d) *Zachary*. And thus *Christ's* 26. & 62. 4. being called, *Immanuel*, that is, *God with us*, was fulfilled, saith *S. Matthew*, when he was called *Jesus*, that is a Saviour, because God's Kindness and Presence, is most eminently shown and brought to effect, in the Salvation and Deliverance of his Servants, *Matth.* 1. 21, 22, 23.

Secondly, Because the Prophets Son was made a sign for the same thing, viz. the deliverance of the Jews from these two invading Princes, in less time, than would suffice him to attain to any understanding. Before the Virgins child, says the Prophet, chap. 7. shall know to refuse the evil, and chuse the good, that is, before he can attain to distinguish between good and bad, the land that thou abhorrest, viz. the Land of † Syria and Israel, now become hateful to the Jews for these their inrodes, shall be forsaken or deprived of both her kings, verse 16. And before the Prophets child, says the relation, chap. 8. shall have knowledge to cry my Father and my Mother, the riches of Damascus the metropolis of Syria, and the spoil of Samaria, the * capital place of the King of Israel, shall be taken away before the king of Assyria, verse 4. In both which places there is an evident promise of the same thing, viz. the destruction of these two Kings, and that within the same space of time, viz. before the Child then promised could attain to the Age of any understanding. So that the Virgins Child referred to in the Prophets time, was most probably the Prophets own Son. And he not being of Royal Race, but living and dying, as I said, a private Person, 'tis plain this part of the Prophecy, viz. the child's being master of the land of Judah, could not be fulfilled in him.

† Verse 1.

* Chap. 7. 8, 9.

Quest. Have you any more things to instance in, which shew this Prophecy was not fulfilled in the Virgins Child of that time?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, Because the Virgins Child in that promise is adorned with the glorious Titles, and plain Characters of *Messiah*. For in further pursuit of God's Promise in this Child, and the deliverance by him, in the ninth Chapter the Prophet cries out triumphantly, *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlast-*

ing

ing Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government, and peace, there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order, and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever, verie 6, 7. Now this Person, whose Title and Character is *Wonderful, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace, and whose government on the throne of David was to be perpetually increasing*, is plainly no other but *Messiah*. And he being the Person promised by *Isaiah*, to be born of a *Virgin*, that Prophecy, however answered in some parts before, could never be fulfilled and accomplished, but in him.

Quest. But you said before, it had respect to the Virgins Son of that time, and was in part effected then. And if it must still be meant of *Christ*, and made good in him again some hundreds of Years after, this makes the same words to be designed for several meanings, yea, such as must be verified at far distant times, which seems a strange thing?

Ans. This is most usual in the *Scriptures*, and especially in Prophecies, which are often spoken of one Person next in view and near at hand, in whom they are fulfilled in part; but of another further off, who, though he lies hid till he is shown by the event, is yet the Person chiefly meant, whereof the other was only a *Figure* or *Type*, and in whom they are fully to be accomplished. Thus God's Promise to *David*, 2 Sam. 7. 12, &c. Of setting up his seed for ever after him, and saying, *I will be his Father and he shall be my Son*, though it were spoken immediately, and in part of *Solomon*, as is most apparent, yet was chiefly intended, and fully made good in *Christ*. And the words of *David*, about God's not leaving his soul in hell, &c. Psal. 16. 8, 9, 10. though seemingly spoken, and in part verified of his own Person, were yet meant, and fully accomplished in *Christ's Resurrection*, whereto *S. Peter* applies them, *Act.* 2. 29, &c. And so when God said unto him, *Thou art my son*, and *I will give thee the Heathen*, Psal. 2. 7, 8, which had its full effect in *Christ*, according to *S. Paul's* interpretation, *Act.* 13. 33. And the same *S. Matthew* assures us of the Virgins Son, which though it might have some regard to a Child of that time, yet was then only fulfilled, when *Christ* came, *Matth.* 1. 21, 22, 23.

Quest.

Quest. But if this Virgins bearing a Son, be meant of Christ, How could it be given to *Achaz*, and the House of *Judah*, for a sign, since he was then afar off, and not so come till long after that Generation?

Ans. Because it was meant of another too, who was to be conceived at that very time, and would prove a sign to them. And as this inferiour accomplishment, would be a sign of this answerable Deliverance in that Age: so would the miraculous Birth of Christ, when it should more eminently fulfil this Prophecy, be a much more illustrious sign, of an incomparably greater, to their Successors. And this also answers the end of its being given here for a sign, which is not limited to any Person or Time, but indefinite, to the House of David. Hear, says the Prophet, not O! *Achaz*, but O! house of David, &c. verse 13, 14. Besides, in *Achaz's* time, the Faith of Christ's being born of a Virgin whilst only promised, would give it the virtue of a sign, as well as the sight of it when performed. The end of it was to assure them, that the Kings of Syria, and Israel, should not prevail against them, verse 4, 7, 9, 10. And this, if they believed it, 'twas apt to do, as an argument from God's intending for them a greater kindness, to his readiness in performing for them a less: for sending Messiah to be born of a Virgin, and to be God with us, must argue a greater power and kindness, than would suffice to work this deliverance from these invading Princes. And after all, it is not unusual in the Scriptures, to beget Faith and confidence, by such signs, as are remote and far off, as God did to *Moses*, Exod. 3. 12. and to *Hezekiah* and the Jews, Isaiah 37. 30.

Quest. By this I perceive that this Prophecy, of a Virgin bearing a Son, was intended of Messiah. But was it fulfilled in Jesus when he came?

Ans. Yes most miraculously. For his Mother that bare him, was a pure Virgin, as appeared both from her own account, and Joseph's her reputed Husband, both Persons of known Integrity, and unquestionable Credit. And when after her espousal, Joseph doubted of her Chastity, because she was found with Child before their coming together, an Angel is dispatched from Heaven to clear her Honour, and to assure him, that what was conceived in her, was not any Humane Production, but
of

of the Holy Ghost, Matth. 1. 18, 19, 20. *The Holy Ghost, as another Angel explained it to her self, coming upon her and the power of the Highest overshadowing her, when she objected the impossibility of her being a Mother, because she was a pure maid, Luke 1. 34, 35. All which was so unquestionable, and notoriously made out to the Apostles, and Primitive Christians, their greatest Enemies finding no pretence to cavil, and start doubts upon it, that they universally and firmly believed it, and thought it a point of so great account, as to deserve a place, and make one Article, in that short Summary and Abridgment of Christian Faith, called the Apostles Creed. For in that one thing we profess to believe concerning Jesus is, That being conceived by the Holy Ghost, he was born of the Virgin Mary.*

Quest. No wonder it found a place there, for it is a sign, not more strange than convincing, being of it self alone sufficient to prove Jesus to be the Christ, since in this he has no Competitors, the like, I think, being never known of any other Man, nor so much as pretended by any of those who set up against him. But besides this, are there not other notable things set down by the Prophets, as belonging to him, which may still serve further to discover him?

Ans. Yes, Secondly, That an extraordinary Spirit, not only of Wisdom and Goodness, but also of Might or miraculous Power, should not only descend now and then by fits, but make a settled abode, and rest upon him. Concerning the branch, that shall grow out of the root of Jesse, says the Prophet, the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord, Isaiah 11. 1, 2. And when once the former Prophecies had pointed out the exact Year, and place of his appearing, this sign of it self had been enough to discover him. For being thus extraordinary, not only for Wisdom and Piety, but also for Might and miraculous Power, when any would survey all the Men of Bethlehem in search of Messiah at the prefixed time, he infinitely, above all others, must needs draw all Mens Eyes to him.

Quest. Are there any more things still belonging to him, which confirm the same?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, That he should be cut off as a Malefactor by corrupt Judgment, noting the main circumstances both previous and concomitant, and the particular, and the unusual manner of his punishment. And that after his Death, he should return from the Grave, and appear alive again. All this the Psalmist, and the Holy Prophets, plainly foretell of him, *When we shall see him*, says *Isaiah*, it will be without form, or comeliness: he is despised, and rejected of men, *Isa.* 53. 2, 3. He is to be betrayed, and sold to his Adversaries for thirty pieces of silver, *Zach.* 11. 12. And when he is in their Hands, he shall be judged as a prisoner, *Isa.* 53. 8. his back shall be scourged, and his face shall be spit on, *Isa.* 50. 6. He shall be tried and condemned, and cut off out of the land of the living, *Isa.* 53. 8. And as for the manner of his Death, that shall be by the piercing of his hands and feet, and keeping his Body between them so at stretch, saith the Psalmist, that they may tell all his bones; a plain description of a Death upon the Cross, which being a Roman punishment, and brought in among the Jews by their Conquest, must needs be unknown in David's Age, and so more observable, to be foretold by him so many hundred Years before, in describing the sufferings of Messiah. Besides, under this Execution, they relate the very words, wherein he should express the bitterness of his Sorrows, and wherein the starers on would vent their cruel Scoffs, and how they should seek to sharpen his Pains by a draught of *vinegar, and pierce or thrust him through, as † Zachary declared in a Text, which the old Rabbins applied to Christ, and when he was dead, share his garment by casting Lots for it. They pierced my hands and my feet, I may tell all my bones, they part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Whilst they stare upon me, and laugh me to scorn, saying, He trusted in God that he would deliver him, let him deliver him if he delight in him, says the Psalmist, *Psalms* 22. 1, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18. Which Psalm, and these passages of it, according to the Letter, never fully verified in the Story of David, after the Jews of old, the New-Testament applies to Christ, *Mat.* 27. 35, 43, 46. & *John* 19. 24. These places evidently foretell the method of his Death and Humiliation. And then after Death, the same Prophets as evidently foretell,

*Ps. 69. 21

† Zach.

12. 10.

* Pf. 16. 10 tell, that he should not lie to * *see corruption*, but return from the grave, to a long, happy, and successful Life. When he shall make his Soul an offering for Sin, he shall prolong his days; so that after his dying as a Sacrifice, he was to be a live Man. Nay, the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied; so that he was also to be an active, undertaking, and successful Man, *verse 10.* yea, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; that is, be most Wealthy, Potent, and Victorious amongst Men, *verse 12.* All which long, active, and happy Life, was to be bestowed on him, not only after his Death, but as a recompence and reward of it. He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, that is, was condemned and executed in the herd of Malefactors, *verse 12.*

Quest. I see that all this was plainly prophesied of the Messiah, and was it fully made good in Jesus Christ?

Ans. Yes, For he appeared in a poor and despicable condition, as a * *carpenter's son*. He was sold by his own Servant † for thirty pieces of silver, which did the Traitor no good, but by an over-ruling Providence was cast to the Potter, or to * buy the Potters Field for a Burying place, as Zachary had foretold. He was put in Bonds as a Prisoner, and led about before † the High-priest, Herod, and the Roman Governour. They * *scourged him*, and † *spit upon him*, they condemned and cut him off, according to the word of Isaiah, not only as a Malefactor, but also in company with them, executing him * *between two thieves*, as the Evangelists relate of him. And as for the manner of his Death, though Crucifixion was no Jewish, but a Roman Punishment, and after the High-priest had pronounced him guilty of † *Blasphemy*, by the constitution of the Jews and the * *Law of Moses*, he should have been stoned: yet by the special ordering of God, he suffered by the piercing of his hands and feet; and hanging so at stretch upon the Tree, that his bones might be numbered, according to the words of David. In his extremities, though the custom of the Nation was to offer stupefactive, as Wine and Myrrh, to benum the

Sense,

* Matth.

13. 55.

Mar. 6 3.

† Matth.

26. 15.

* Mat..

27. 7.

† Luke 22.

& chap.

23.

* Jo. 19. 1.

† Matth.

26. 67.

* Mar. 15.

27. 28.

† Matth.

26. 65.

* Lev. 24.

16.

Sense, and ease the pains of dying Persons; yet, to verify the saying of the *Psalmist*, they brought him * *Vinegar*, to whet and sharpen his. The *Chief Priests*, with the *Scribes and Elders*, most inhumanly staring on him, said with cruel scorn, *He † trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him*, the very words, which the Holy *Psalmist* had so long before set down for them: and he himself cried out, * *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* The very words again, which that Holy *Prophet* spoke for him in his extremity. As he hung upon the Cross, a Soldier † *pierced his side*, and thrust him through, to fulfil the words of *Zachary*. And when they saw that he had expired, the four *Soldiers* that stood by, and were to share his Cloathes, would not divide his seamless coat, but * *cast lots for it*, according to the Prediction of the *Psalmist*. Amidst all which strange congruities, he had one other qualifying circumstance, which the *Prophet Isaiah* remarks, *viz. to make his grave*, as with the wicked, by dying for a pretended Crime, so with the rich in his death, *Isa. 53. 9.* which was verified, by his being wrapt in fine linen, and Entombed, as by his care, so in † *Joseph of Arimathea's* own Sepulchre, who was a * *rich man*, and an † *honourable counsellor*. And then as for his return to life again, to be an undertaking, successful, and most potent, happy Person: that has been most notoriously, and eminently made good, in our Blessed Saviour's Resurrection, and in the unparalleled success of his Religion in all places since that time. And this again, especially his *Resurrection*, is another note, which as it fits *Jesus* to be the *Messiah*, so beyond dispute excludes all other Men. For though *Theudas*, and *Judas*, as *Gamaliel* * observed, and other. false Christs, in just reward of their Impostures, have been condemned and slain; yet was never any of them seen to return to life again, to carry on their pretences, and to prosper and thrive in them.

Quest. Have you any other notable, and appropriating Marks to add from them, to these already given?

Ans.

* John 19.

28, 29. &

Matth. 27.

34, 48.

† Matth.

27. 41, 43.

* Matth.

27. 46.

† John 19.

34.

* John 19.

23, 24.

* Matth.

27. 60.

* Matth.

27. 57.

† Mark 15.

43.

* Aft. 5.

36, 37.

Ans. Yes, *Further*, That he should put an end to the Jewish Sacrifices, and to the Covenant brought in by Moses, by reason of its imperfection; and instead thereof, make a new, and more Gracious and Perfect Covenant, between God and Man. And this being a most publick change, and abolishing an Institution most peculiarly distinguished, and universally eyed and taken notice of among Men, it must needs be a convincing sign, and such, as all might easily see, and observe when it came. When Messiah comes, saith the Prophet Daniel, he shall make an end of sin-offerings, and cause the Mosaical Sacrifices and Oblations to cease, Dan. 9. 24, 27. Behold! the days come, saith the Lord by Jeremiah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and Judah, Jer. 31. 31. Which days are plainly the days of Messiah, noted verse 22, who was to be the Messenger or Angel of the Covenant, answerable to the Angel of God's Presence among the Jews, by whose ministry he established the Mosaical Covenant, as Malachy foretold, Mal. 3. 1. And this Covenant was to offer more large Indulgence, and richer

* Exod.

23. 20, 21.

Gal. 3. 19.

† Zach. 9. Joy, as † Zachary; a publication of Peace, and Salvation, a bringing glad tidings of good, a binding up of broken hearts, and proclaiming liberty to the Captives, and preach-

* Is. 51. 7. ing the acceptable year of the Lord, as * Isaiah: it was to & 61. 1, 2. forgive iniquity, as † Jeremy; making reconciliation for † Jer. 31. it, as * Daniel; opening a fountain to wash away sin and uncleanness, as † Zachary says.

* Dan. 9. Quest. And did Jesus fulfil all this?

24.

† Zach.

13. 1.

* Jer. 31. himself, Heb. 9. 25, 26. He hath brought in a new Co-
33. & Heb. venant, the Laws whereof have more root in our own
8. 10. Reason, called their being, * writ in our hearts and
† Mr. minds; which makes them the easier to be remembred, as
Smith of a Moses is brought in saying † the Laws of Messiah should
Legal be, according to an old Tradition of the Rabbies: and the
Right, ch. Mercy whereof extends to the forgiveness of more sins,
2. out of as the Prophets foretold, than could be hoped for by the
Bresbith Law of Moses. For Murder, or Adultery, under that
Rabba. Law,

Law, God admitted of no Sacrifice to bear any persons iniquity, as may be seen in * Leviticus, and as David * Lev. 20. declares in Uriah's case, Psal. 51. 16. Nor for Idolatry, ^{10.} Deut. 17. 2, 3, &c. nor for giving their seed to Molock, nor for seeking after Wizards, nor for cursing Parents, nor for Incest, or Sodomy, or Bestiality, all which were surely to be put to death according to God's Ordinance, Lev. 20. 2, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16. Nor in general, for any presumptuous offence, the iniquity whereof, as the Law says, was not to be laid upon any Sacrifice, but to rest upon themselves, and they to be utterly cut off, Num. 15. 30, 31. and die without mercy, Heb. 10. 28. Nay, under it a curse was pronounced, not only to those, who were guilty of some certain offences, but, what was more hard to be avoided, to all, who continued not in all points written in the Law, to do them, Deut. 27. 26. & Gal. 3. 10. But for all these sins, unpardonable by the Mosaick Covenant, our Saviour, who, according to the Holy Prophets, was to bring in a fuller Pardon and Oblivion of sins, than had been offered before, doth proclaim Pardon, on Mens true Repentance, by his New Covenant. By it, as S. Paul declares, all that believe, are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses, Act. 13. 38, 39.

Quest. Was he to do any more things besides this?

Ans. Yes, Fifthly, To found a kingdom, and appear as a mighty Prince. The Government, says Isaiah, shall be upon his shoulder, and it shall increase without end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order, and establish it, with justice and judgment, for ever, Isaiah 9. 6, 7. And this Principality, they say, shall be, not over the Jewish Nation alone, to whom the Church of God had been confined afore-time: but over the Gentiles too, who should all come in, and submit to him. The root of Jesse, which shall stand for an Ensign of the People, shall set up an Ensign for the Nations, and unto it shall the Gentiles seek, Isa. 11. 10, 12. My servant shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, I will give ^{† Mal. 2. 11.} him for a covenant of the People, for a light of the Gentiles, for salvation to the ends of the earth, Isa. 42. 1, 6. & 49. 6. To him whom man despiseth, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship. I will lift up my hand to the

Gentiles, and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their Queens thy nursing-mothers: they shall bow down to thee, with their face towards the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet, Isa. 49. 7. 22, 23.

Quest. If *Messiah* were to come as such a Royal Prince, and erect an Universal Monarchy over all Nations; by that he might easily be known, and no Man would be at a loss to discern who is he, when once this is done.

Ans. No more, than they are at a loss to know who is the *King of Great-Britain*, the *German Emperor*, or the *Grand Signior*. Besides the dependancies, that make so many concerned with them, the Quality and Greatness of such Characters, is enough to make any Man known, and draw all Eyes upon him.

Quest. And did *Jesus* found such a Kingdom?

Ans. Yes, such Kingly Power he claimed before *Pontius Pilate*, John 18. 37. And such he exercises in the World. His Dominion, praised be God, goes beyond the *Jews*, and is spread far and wide among the Nations, whose Princes submit their Scepters to his, and glory in being his Servants, and account being stiled *Defenders of the Faith*, *most Christian*, or *Catholick Kings*, the very Flower of all their Titles.

Quest. But how did he appear like such a mighty Prince, since he made no pompous Entrance, with splendid Retinues, and strong Guards; nor erected any Courts, to judge of Properties; nor lifted potent Armies, to repel Invaders; nor came furnished, either with rich Mannors and Preferments, to reward good Services; or with visible and present Punishments, such as Confiscations, Prisons, Gibbets, to avenge the Transgressions of his Followers?

Ans. This, indeed, was the thing, that of all others was a stumbling Block to the *Jews*, who expected a *Secular Saviour*, a Prince in worldly Power, Pomp, and Greatness. But as to *Messiah's outward appearance*, the Prophets foretold quite contrary things. So did *Isaiah* among others, calling *Christ*, him whom man despiseth, whom the nation abhorreth, a servant of rulers, Isa. 49. 7.

He

He shall grow up, saith he in another place, as a tender plant out of a dry ground, he hath no form nor comeliness, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised, and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and we hid as it were our faces from him, being ashamed to own him, *Isa.* 53. 2, 3. By these accounts, in outward appearance, he was to come more like a Peasant, than a Prince. But his Kingdom so much cried up, was to be Spiritual, giving Laws, not only to Overt-Acts, which are triable in Secular Courts, but to Mens Hearts and Consciences; protecting, and aiding them, by unseen Providences, and Spiritual Assistances; rewarding and punishing, not with Temporal, but Eternal Recompences; not meddling with a Secular Domination, over Mens Persons, or Purfes, in things relating to this Life, but leaving that Power in the same hands, where it was lodg'd before. And such a principality as this our Saviour claimed, telling *Pilate* that he was a King, but that his kingdom was not of this world; for if it had, his servants would have fought, to have delivered him from the Jews, *John* 18. 36.

Quest. Was *Messiah* to do any other notable thing, which would still be a further manifestation of him?

Ans. Yes, *Sixthly*, He was to convert the Heathen world from their Idol-worship, and make Pagan-Idolatry fall before him. In that day, saith *Isaiah*, describing *Christ's* Kingdom both over Jews and * *Gentiles*, the Lord * *Verse 2*, alone shall be exalted, and the Idols shall be utterly abolish, 4. *Isaiah* 2. 17, 18. In that day, says God by *Zachary*, I will cut off the names of the Idols out of the land, and they shall no more be remembred, *Zach.* 13. 2. All nations then shall serve him, all nations shall call him blessed, saith the *Psalmist*, *Psal.* 72. 11, 17.

Quest. Did *Jesus* perform this when he came?

Ans. Yes, he drave the proud Spirits out of their Temples, and silenced them in all their Oracles and other Divinations, and convinced the World, that those whom they had hitherto worshipped for Gods, were Devils, and that those are no Gods, which are made with hands. And of this there were so many instances, as there were of Heathen Men, and Heathen Nations, that turned Christians.

Quest. Those Converts, indeed, are so many plain proofs of the overthrow of Idols, since the first step in Christianity is the renouncing of the Devil, and of all Idol-gods. But how doth it appear that he put an end to their Oracles, and other Divinations, which were the strongest argument of their Divinity among their Worshipers?

Ans. As his Birth drew near, they all grew dumb: God stopping all their false mouths against that time, that his own Eternal Word might be heard alone. The famed *Apollo* was then so sparing of his Responses, that

* *De Divi-* * *Cicero* thought his renowned Oracle at *Delphos* had ceas-
nat. l. 2. ed in his days. And though afterwards he did speak

† *Dioclesian* sent to *Apollo*, and had his Answer to begin his Persecution, *Laët. de Mort. Persec. c. II.* see also the Responses by the *vates Delphici Apollinis*, in the time of *Severus ap. Elium in Spartian. Rescen. Nigro.* And the Oracles, as well as other Divinations promised victory to *Licinius*, *Euseb. de vit. Constant. l. 2. c. 4.*

† *Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 5. c. 16.*

* *Πειρὸς ὁ ἀλεξάνδριος*
κρησιν.

* *Vid. Euseb. Præp. Evang. l. 5. c. 1. & Theodor. de curand. Grec. Af. sect. l. 13.*

† sometimes, as I shall note in several instances: yet by the Power and Spirit of our Lord, when his Religion had got footing in the World, his Mouth was wholly stopped, and locked up with the Keys of never-Divining, silence, as he himself says in a Farewel Answer recorded by his Champion † *Porphyrus*. And so were also the Mouths of *Jupiter Ammon*, and of all other impure Spirits most famed for Oracles in other places. This their devout Worshipers with grief beheld, and admired: and *Plutarch*, a learned Heathen, who lived within an hundred Years after *Christ*, writ a * *Book* about it still extant, wherein he inquires the best he can into the causes of it.

Quest. I see their general silence is beyond question. But can you show that *Jesus* silenced them?

Ans. Their own professed Advocates make him the cause of the Demons withdrawing themselves from Men, both in this, and in other effects of their presence with them. For since *Jesus* began to be worshipped, says, * *Porphyrus*, the Gods are no longer conversant with Men, nor has any Man received any publick benefit by them. Nay the vanquished Spirits themselves, who gave so many Testimonies to him, when he drove them from before his personal Presence here on Earth, in their Oracles, and other Divinations, confessed so. For when

Augustus

Augustus, in whose time our Saviour was born, inquired of *Apollo* who should succeed him in the Empire, his Reply was, as † *Suidas* reports, That an Hebrew Boy, who † Under rules the blessed Gods, had commanded him to pack away to *Auyas* & Hell, and leave that place, so that he was like to give *Kaïras* them no more answers. Again, in the days of *Dioclesian*, as * *Constantine* relates in his Edict to the Provincials of * *Euseb de the East*, he gave out another Oracle, Declaring he could vit. Con- give no true Answers, because of the just Persons upon the stat. l. 2. Earth. And when *Dioclesian* asked, Who were those just c. 30, 51. Persons: the Priest answered, They were the Christians. Which *Constantine* declares, and calls God to witness, was said in his hearing, who, being a very Youth, attended the Emperour at that time. Afterwards, in the Reign of *Julian* †, when his Temple at *Daphne*, celebrated for Ora- † *Sozom.* cles, was confronted by a Christian Church, wherein were *Hist. Eccl.* laid the Bones of the Martyr *Babylas*, he presently grew l. 5. c. 19. speechless. And when *Julian* pressed him for an An- & *Theod.* swer, by magnificent Gifts and Sacrifices, at last he told *Hist. Eccl.* him, That he was hindred from giving Oracles by the dead l. 3. c. 10. Bodies in that place. Which the Emperour well under- & *Chrys.* standing, singled out the Coffin of *Babylas*, without distur- *Homil. de* bing the other dead, whereof many lay there interr'd, S. *Bab.* and ordered the Christians to remove it. Indeed, when the Heathens at any time consulted their Gods by Sacrifice, and were to read their Answer painted upon the entrails, if any of their Christian Servants happened to stand by, the wicked Spirits fled away without giving the accustomed signs, and their deserted Prophets could make no Predictions, Which being complained of to their wicked and superstitious Princes, was several times the chief cause, as * *Lactantius* notes, which enraged them to persecute the * *Instit. l.* Christians. In particular it inflamed *Dioclesian* to begin 4. c. 27. his Persecution, the Bloodiest of all others. For his madness against them, as the † same Author reports, was be- † *De Mort.* cause their presence, and profession of Faith in Jesus, stop- *Persec. c.* ped the mouth of his Gods, and troubled all his Sacrifices. 10. So that whilst any of them was there, though he offered often, one time after another, this superstitious Man, an insatiable inquirer into Futurities, could receive no answer. And the same as *St. Dionysius* † relates, had † *Ap. Eu-* before that been the occasion of the *Valerian* Persecution, *feb. Hist.* Nay, to shew further the Power, which, as I say, nor *Eccl. l. 7.*

* *Apol.*
c. 23.

only *Christ* himself, but every common *Christian* had to command and controul these unclean *Demons*, * *Tertulian* desires the Emperours to make the Experiment, and bring any that is vexed by a *Demon*, or any *Prophet* who is thought inspired by him, before the *Judgment-seat*: and there set any poor *Christian*, to command that *Demon* to speak who he is. And if, saith he, not during to lye to him, he doth not as truly there before you all confess himself a *Devil*, as he had falsely elsewhere proclaimed himself a *God*, then let that malapert *Christian* be put to death, for undertaking what he is not able to make good. And the same is alledged by † *Minutius Felix* in his *Book* against the *Heathens*.

* *De Idol.*
Van. p. 30.

Quest. This extirpation of *Pagan* Idolatry, being an effect so illustriously great, and that would be so vehemently, opposed, and wherein so many People and Nations were concerned, it must needs be the observation, and astonishment of all the World, and all Men must evidently see when it is brought about?

Ans. Yes, and so it happened. After our Saviour's Death, it was the great business that took up Mens thoughts and discourse, that exercised the Pens of the best Wits, and the Skill of Politicians, that unsheathed the Magistrates Sword against the Godliest of his Subjects, and exposed the blessed *Martyrs* on Theatres, to wild Beasts, and all sorts of Torments and Deaths, in all the *Roman* Empire, and other places, for several Ages. This Triumph of *Messiah* over *Satan*, that grand Enemy and Usurper, made a greater, and more universal and lasting noise, and astonishment, than ever was made at the downfall of the vastest, and most potent Empire.

Quest. But besides this evidence, as it accomplished a Prediction; was not such wonderful prevalence of *Christ's* Religion, over all the Legal Establishments and Idolatrous Religions of the World, a clear testimony of God to him, as it was a most miraculous, and plainly Divine thing?

Ans. Yes, indisputably it was. When Religions prevail, that have been in possession for several Ages; that shows the power of Custom, and Education, When such, as are enforced by Laws and Arms, and which the Secular Power doth espouse, and propagate; that shows the

the might of Authority, and forcible Violence. When such, as are agreeable to Mens Lusts, and gratifie their natural inclinations; that manifests how easily Men are persuaded to what they like, and the mighty influence of natural Propensions. When such, as come fortified with a general Vogue, and numerous Assertors; that shows the over-awing influence of Crouds, and Multitudes. But when a Religion is made up of self-denials, and runs in many things cross to Mens common sentiments, and in more to their inclinations, and foretels sufferings to its followers, and intrages evil Men, and evil Spirits: When it decries the assumed Divine Honours of Emperours, and stints and controuls all their unjust, and impious commands: When it lessens the credit of all *Gentile* Priests, who at that time had the guidance of Mens Consciences, reproving their most extol'd Opinions, as false, or frivolous; and their most beloved Practices, as wicked, or superstitious: When it enters against all authority of Laws, and craft of Politicians, and subtilty of Philosophers, and power of Magistrates, and violence of Tumults, and Prejudices and Lusts of all, and seeks to pull up all the firmest establishments of former Ages, altering not only the publick Constitution, but, what usually men are more fond of, the approved Religions of Kingdoms, under which God had made their Ancestors most flourishing and victorious, as was plain in the case of the *Romans*: When it attempts all this by a few, and thole too unlearned, and unfriended, mean, and despicable Persons: And when they seek to archieve it not by fraud, or indirect arts, or quaint speeches, or sly allurements, but by meekly telling a plain story concerning *Jesus*, and hoping to prevail and conquer all, not by Fighting, but Suffering for him. When a Religion, I say that teaches such hard and unwelcome Lessons, and is managed by such Instruments, and meets with such oppositions, and has nothing humane, great, or promising about it, but all things great, and, so reason insuperable against it, doth yet after all overspread the World, at the same time that all visible Powers seem thus combined to drive it out of it: 'tis plain that it is helped on by an *invisible* Hand, and that God interposes to make it victorious.

And I need not show, how this was the case of Christianity, in all these particulars.

Quest. Those Prophecies, which prefix the exact time of *Messiah's* coming, did plainly prove *Jesus* to be the Man, because none started up at the time appointed, to make any competition. But if there had, these other signs, which you have given from them, are so great, so peculiar, and so obvious, I will not say, to be observed, but so hard, and almost impossible, when brought to pass, to be overlooked, as must needs to the satisfaction of all reasonable inquirers, demonstrate him to be the Person against all pretenders.

Ans. Most certainly they would, to all that knew his Story, what he was, and did, and would take the pains to compare it with these distinguishing marks, which the Holy Prophets several hundred Years before had given of him. For had any *false Christ* appeared exactly in the fulness of time, (as through the care of God's watchful Providence, no one then made any pretence besides him,) yet had it been easie to show that such deceiver was not the *Christ* whom the Prophets foretold, because he was not born of a pure Maid, whereto none of them ever did and no Man but our Saviour ever could reasonably pretend. Or because, if he did at some times shew some feats of Magick, as the Enchanters whom *Iosephus* mentions, yet he was not withal eminent for Piety, or had not the Spirit resting upon him, to do Cures on all occasions, and of all sorts, or to cast out Devils of whatever kinds, and numbers, which no Man but *Jesus* ever enjoyed. Or because, though he might die for his Imposture, as he justly deserved; yet his Death was not in that way which they had described, nor with those many notable circumstances which they had prefixed for it. Nor would any such *false Christs* rise again from the Dead, as God plainly promised *Messiah* should, and as our *Jesus* did. Nor were they any of them the Authors of a new Covenant, which supplied what the Covenant from Mount Sinai wanted. Neither did they erect a Kingdom, taking in the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jewish* Nation: nor had Kings and Queens to come and worship, and pay homage to them. Nor did they convert the *Gentile* World from the worship of

Idols,

Idols, and drive the Devils out of all their Temples, as he did most gloriously by his appearance.

Quest. But after all these instances, of a punctual, and exact accomplishment of the antient Prophecies in Jesus, doth not *Isaiab* foretel, that in *Messiah's* days, the *Wolf* shall dwell with the *Lamb*, and the *Leopard* with the *Kid*, that the sucking Child shall play safely on the hole of the *Asp*, and they shall not hurt, nor destroy in all Gods holy mountain, *Isa.* 11. 6, 7, 8, 9. That then Men shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more, *Isa.* 2. 4. By these, and such like Prophecies, *Messiah* was to bring in a marvellous Probity, and universal Peace into the World. And amidst all the injuries, the bitter Contentions, and bloody Wars among Christians, how is this accomplished?

Ans. These Prophecies speak not this of all Persons in his days, but only of all who will be his true † followers, and govern themselves according to Prince *Messiah's* Laws, and Practice. For that, which shall prevent all doing hurt among them, says *Isaiab*, is the full knowledge of the Lord, which restrains only such, as will practise what they understand, *Isa.* 11. 9. And they, who shall beat their swords into plow shares, saith he again, are the many people, whom *Messiah* shall rebuke, which, according to the usual Phrase of Scripture, may imply their amending upon his rebuking them, *Isa.* 2. 4. They were the sincerely devout, and honestly obedient, who say to one another, *Let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in them*, verse 3. But as for the inviolable maintenance of this Probity and Peace, by those, who are only his nominal Servants; or by the universality of Men in his days: that doth not follow from these places nor doth it well comport with the present state of humane Nature, which is mixt with many angry, and incroaching Passions; nor suit with other Prophecies before-mentioned, that speak of much wickedness after *Messiah's* coming, and of many still retaining their old genius, which Predictions must all be accomplished, as well as these.

Vid. Just. Mart. A-pol. 2. p. 78. & Dial. cum Tryph. p. 336, 337.

Quest.

Quest. But if this Peace and Probity are to be so limited, and conditionate in the event; how come they to be expressed so generally, and absolutely in the Prediction? Is it not odd to speak of an effect as universal under *Messiah*, which shall not appear universally in all under him, but only in those who will hearken to him?

Ans. No; for in an effect, wherein both he, and they are jointly concerned, his saying that all shall do it, implies that they shall so far, as concerns his part, and that he would do all, which behoves him to do towards it. And this *Jesus* has done, giving a Law as apt to engender, and preserve Peace, as any Law can be, and taking away all separating and dividing rites introduced by *Moses*, which were apt to make difference between *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And to say all *Men* shall do a thing, when God has done his part to make all do it, though, through their obstinate wickedness, many of them will not do it in the event, is a form of Speech usual in Holy Scripture. Thus it is particularly in *Ezekiel*, when God foretels the taking away all detestable Idols; and yet in the same place speaks of several, who would still retain them, and thereby incur his heavy indignation, *Ezekiel* 11. 18, 21. And in *Jeremy*, when God foretels his peoples living again in their own land after the captivity, most piously, and peaceably, *Jer.* 32. 37, &c. although, through their stubborn wickedness, which nothing would amend, things fell out contrary.

Quest. But though these Prophecies do not imply, that every Man shall live so when *Messiah* comes; yet however they seem to note, that many will, who would not otherwise; and that Godliness, Peace and Justice, shall mightily increase in the World, by his appearance. And has this been fulfilled by *Jesus*?

Ans. Yes, it was eminently verified in the first times. For then the Christians were remarkably, as the most virtuous livers, and honest dealers, so most kind and friendly among themselves; See, * said the *Gentiles*, how the Christians love one another. They were absolutely the best Neighbours, being so far from offering any injuries, that they durst not requite them, but with Prayers and Kindnesses. They were indisputably the most tame, and peaceable Subjects, overcoming all the outrageous violence, and oppressions of their Persecutors,

* *Tertull.*
Apol. c. 39.

rurs, not by fighting their way through them, but by
Faith and *Patience* under them. And like effects, his
 Religion has produced in all other times, upon all those,
 who were true followers both of him and them, and
 were Christians in very deed, not only in name and pro-
 fession. It has improved all peaceable tempers, and
 sweetned many lowre, and smoothed many rough ones,
 and brought Men of the most different Complexions, Es-
 tates, Interests, and Abilities, to live fairly and socia-
 bly together. Indeed, all Men are not thereby made
 godly, just, and tame, as we must not expect they ever
 will be in this World; for Men will be Men, and shew
 human passions, and errors, under any institution. But
 yet the common estate of the World is much amended,
 and things generally are much more fairly, and equita-
 bly managed, and the true God is more duly and de-
 voutly worshipped, and all Virtue and Piety are held in
 greater reputation, and Injustice is much curbed, and
 both private, and publick Quarrels are much more fre-
 quently prevented, and more fairly and speedily com-
 posed since *Christ's* coming amongst us, than they were
 before. So that although the improvement of these Vir-
 tues among us, is little in respect of our aids, and op-
 portunities; yet is it great in comparison with the for-
 mer face of the World, and may pass for a New, Righ-
 teous, and reformed State, in respect of what it was in
 days of *Heathen* Ignorance. And this is as much ac-
 complishment, as 'tis reasonable to require in such Pro-
 phecies; which being made of Men, who have frail and
 corrupt Natures, and converse in the midst of tempta-
 tions, ought not to be strain'd beyond what is consistent
 with the condition of this World, and with humane Na-
 ture, and Circumstances. But if the above-cited Prophe-
 cies did really speak of a more universal effect, than has
 been hitherto accomplished: there is time enough still
 behind, ere *Christ* resign up the Kingdom to the Father,
 wherein to make it good. For of the things predicted
 to fall out under *Messiah*, some came to pass at first, and
 others, in the long flux of time ever since, have still been
 successively fulfilled; but many are still behind, and to
 have no accomplishment, till near the day of Judg-
 ment.

Quest. You have fully shewed, how *Jesus* appears to be the *Christ* from *ancient Prophecies*, whereby I plainly perceive how deservedly in the *Revelations*, the *Spirit of Prophecy* is called the *testimony of Jesus*, *Rev. 19. 10.* But do the *Jews*, to whom these Prophets all spake, and who not only had the keeping, but were also most diligent and careful in examining these *Oracles*, understand these places as Predictions of *Messiah*, which appear to have had such clear, and undeniable accomplishment in our *Jesus*?

Ans. The old *Jews*, who lived before *Christ*, generally did, as is plain from *Rabbi Nehumias*, and others, and from their general expectation of him about the time prescribed, according to those Prophecies. And so did numbers of their earliest, and most renowned † Doctors since, as learned Men have shown abundantly from their Writings. But many of the later *Rabbins*, not daring to deny the suitableness of the events in *Jesus*, have chose rather to wrest those places, against their plain meaning, and the opinions of their Ancestors, to other purposes, and deny them as spoken of *Messiah*. And what should make this difference, and cause later Men to go off from ancient times, even from those, who lived near to some of the Prophets themselves, who, if they gave any hints, and interpretations of what they delivered in their own days, were most likely to gather up, and understand such traditionary Explications? The reason of this difference is pretty obvious. For those ancient *Jews*, living before *Christ*, looked only to the Prophecies themselves, and the general sense and expectation raised about them by the Prophets: But among the *Jews* since *Christ*, several look also at personal prejudices, and had rather deny any thing, than own *Jesus* to be *Messiah*, which they cannot well avoid doing, if those places are spoken of him.

† *Vid. de*
confes. Try-
phonis ap.
Just. Mart
Dial. cum
Tryph.
P. 316.

C H A P. III.

Proving Jesus to be the Christ, from other Divine Testimonies.

The Contents.

Jesus proved to be the Christ, 2. From the testimony of John the Baptist. John knew this by Revelation, and had it confirmed by a sign. He was an acknowledged Prophet, and of most clear and currant fame. And gave this testimony, before he was personally acquainted with Jesus. 3. From the testimony of Jesus himself. Several considerations shewing the validity of this testimony, though it were in his own case. This not impugned by Christ's words, John 5. 31. nor gives any colour or advantage to Fanatical Enthusiasts. 4. From his Miracles. These no lying wonders, as may appear, because shewn in several instances not imitable by Demons. As, 1. Foretelling future Contingencies. An account of Demon-Predictions among the Gentiles. 2. Discerning Hearts, and Thoughts. 3. Raising the Dead. 4. Casting out Devils, of most stubborn ranks, and in greatest numbers and combinations. It may also appear from their intent and design; and from their numbers, and the manner of working them. No opposing the Miracles of Moses against Christ's Miracles because they were wrought to set aside the Law of Moses. That Law was given with a design to be altered. An account how for all that, several of its Precepts are justly called Statutes for ever. 5. From the testimony of the Father, who declared Jesus to be the Christ by audible voices. And by raising him from the dead, and shewing him in full possession of his prerogatives.

Quest.

Question. BUT besides this proof of Jesus being the Christ, from ancient Prophecies, you said the same would be evidently made out, by several Divine Testimonies other ways. Pray what are those Testimonies?

Ans. The Testimony of *John the Baptist*, who was sent into the World to give Witness to it; the Testimony of *Jesus himself*, which very well deserves to be trusted; the Testimony of his *miraculous works*, which are an evidence drawn up by the Finger of God; and, to name no more, the Testimony of *God the Father*, who himself became a Voucher of it. So that he must give the lye, both to Heaven, and Earth, to God, and Men, who shall disbelieve, or gainsay it.

Ans. Did *John the Baptist* testify Jesus to be the Christ?

Ans. Yes, and that upon a most publick occasion, when the great Council of the Nation, the Sanhedrim, sent Priests and Levites to him on purpose, to know whether he himself were the Christ, John 1. 19. For then his answer was, That he was not the Christ, verse 20. but that the Christ was come, and was then among them, verse 26, 27. Yea, the next day seeing Jesus coming to him, he points at him, and declares to them all, that he is the Person. Behold, saith he, the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the world. This is he, of whom I said, after me comes a man, which is preferred before me, verse 29, 30. which Testimony he repeats again the next day, upon another occasion, verse 35, 36. And this Testimony Jesus alledged for himself when he reasoned with the Jews, in vindication of his own Authority. Ye sent unto John, viz. in the message from Jerusalem, and he bare witness unto the truth, John 5. 33.

Quest. But how came John to know it, and why in this case must we take his word?

Ans. Because he was a Prophet, all the Jews, as the Scriptures testify, held John for a Prophet, Matth. 21. 26. Nay, as Christ says, he was one of the greatest of Prophets, for of all that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist, Matth. 11. 9, 11. And he declares, that the Spirit revealed this to him: nay, that it gave him a visible and most illustrious sign,

for

for his greater Confirmation in the same ; saying unto him, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descend, and remain on him, that same is he. And this Spirit, John declares he did see descend in a bodily shape upon Jesus at his Baptism, and at the same time, as S. Matthew * adds, he heard a voice from God, calling him his beloved Son for his fuller conviction, John 1. 32, 33. Yea, since, as the Nazarene Gospel relates it, upon this descent, presently there shone a great light about the place ; and a fire was lighted in Jordan. wherein John Baptized him, as † Justin the Martyr testifies : what would still be a more assuring Tryph. proof to John in this case, this bodily descent of the Holy Ghost, was in a body of Light and dazzling Splendor, the usual Glory wherein God himself was wont to appear, which hovering over our Saviour, as a Dove doth when it lights, and darting forth its bright Beams round about him, did plainly represent what the Jews call the Shechinah, and proclaim him to be a Divine Person. Thus did John know Jesus to be the Messiah, by an evidence infallible, and every way convincing. And this he testifies of him, not as a thing by the bye, but says it was the very Errand whereon he was sent, and for declaration whereof he was called out by God to be a Prophet. That he should be made manifest to Israel, says he, therefore am I come, John 1. 31.

* Matth.
3. 16, 17.

† Dial. cum
p. 315.

Quest. Indeed, if John had such Revelations of this matter, as he declares, 'tis plain he was not deceiv'd about it himself, but spoke out of sober knowledge, and certain grounds. So that if there is no cause to question his honesty, there is no getting off from his Testimony. But what can you say to show him a true and honest Man, who would not feign things to deceive others ?

Ans. His Sanctity, and Integrity, were the honour, and admiration of his own times. He led a most mortified, rigid Life, neither caring how hard his Fare was, nor how coarse his Habit. He neither eat Bread, nor drank Wine, whence in Scripture he is said to come, neither eating, nor drinking, i. e. not living upon the usual Diet of other Men. Matth. 11. 18. compared with Luke 7. 33. His meat was locusts, and wild Honey ; and all his rayment of camels hair, girt about him with a leathern girdle, Matth. 3. 4. And thus voluntarily abandoning, I will

* John 1.
27.

will not say the pleasures, but even the ease, and common conveniences of the Flesh, he was not capable to be tempted by them. He was eminently above all affectation of Power, or Praise; insomuch, that when all were ready to receive him for *Messiah*, he told them he ** was not worthy to untie his shoes*, and was glad when he could fix that Honour on *Jesus*, whose right it was, declaring openly, *he must increase, but I must decrease*, John 3. 29, 30, 31. He was illustrious for Piety, and most bold and zealous in reprovng Vice, as he fully manifested by his undaunted freedom, in censuring the sins of all *states*, and *sorts* of People, as *they came to him* for *Baptism*, Matth. 3. And as for his sincerity and plain-dealing, till *Jesus* came, they could not in all that Age show such a down-right, honest Man. When *Herod* set his heart upon him, and loved to hear him, his growing great at Court did not make him swerve in the least from his Country simplicity, or teach him how to flatter, nor would he there so much as connive at his *Prince's* sin, though he was to lose, not only his Favour, but his own Hearts Blood, for his plain freedom in taxing and re-proving it, Matth. 14. 3, 4, 10.

Quest. These are signal proofs of an upright, honest Man. But did the *Jews*, who lived in those days, see all this in him?

Ans. Yes, and honour and admire it too. He was, as *Christ* says, *a burning and a shining light* among them, and for a while, till he had disgusted them by testifying so fully for *Jesus*, they were willing to rejoice in him, John 5. 35. They all held him for a Prophet, and so if they would be true to themselves, ought surely to rely upon his word, Matth. 21. 26. They thought it not enough to Admire and Praise him, but thronged in to become his *Disciples*, and *Followers*: and those that did so, were not only the ignorant vulgar, but the most learned and best reputed *Sects*, the *Pharisees* and *Sadducees*, who came, desiring to receive *Baptism* at his hands, Matth. 3. 7. Nay, they did not only repute him for a Prophet, but fancied him the greatest of all Prophets, the *Christ*, whom all desired, and expected. And this was not barely the surmize of some private Men, but the opinion of the *Sanhedrim*, that Great Council and Representative of the *Jewish* Nation. For they sent Deputies

to him, a select number of *Priests, and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him this Question, John 1. 19.* Thus great, and currant was *John's* Fame in the *Jewish* Nation, as is declared also by † *Josephus* a *Jewish* Historian; † *Antiq. l. 18. c. 7.* which, when they begun to value him less, out of their hatred to *Jesus*, to whom he bore witness, was yet of such awful Authority and Account, that they, who would not receive it, durst not openly gainsay it; as the *Pharisees* durst not, who, when *Jesus* pressed them with *John's* Testimony for his Authority, pitifully sneaked, and openly refused to give any Answer to it, *Matth. 21. 27.*

Quest. But was not *Jesus* *John's* Friend? And though he was too mortified to be tempted, and too honest to be gained by any thing else; yet might not affection blind his Eyes; and he sanse more, and speak things greater, than were true of *Jesus*, out of Friendship?

Ans. No, if he had been an old Friend, the grounds *John* gives are so clear and full, as could not in any reason be questioned. But, what is still a further circumstance in this Testimony, he is careful to tell us, that he declared this of *Jesus*, before they were acquainted. For when he gives his Testimony to him, after he had seen the *Holy Ghost* descend upon him at his *Baptism*, *I knew him not*, says he, *but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, that same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* And this *I saw* by him, and bare record, *John 1. 33, 34.* 'Tis true, when he came to him for *Baptism*, which was before he had seen this sign, or made this declaration, *S. Matthew* says, *John knew him*, and thereupon would have put him by, as *having more need to be baptized of him*, *Matth. 3. 14.* But that was purely by *Revelation*, the same Spirit then suggesting the presence of *Messiah* to *John*, that made him leap for joy in the womb, at the salutation of the blessed Virgin, after She had conceived him, *Luc. 1. 44.* But till he gave this Testimony to him, he knew him not as a Friend or Acquaintance, nor had any former Conversation, or correspondence passed between them.

Quest. No wonder this Testimony should over-awe the Jews, when Jesus urged it for himself, though it could not convince them.

But besides this Testimony of *John the Baptist*, you mentioned also the Testimony of *Jesus himself*, as deserving credit. Pray clear up that.

Ans. This also Jesus alledges for himself, and stands upon it. *I am one that bear witness of my self, and my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go,* John 8. 14, 18.

Quest. But this is only his own word, in his own case. And Men are too apt to say great, and undue things of themselves, out of a desire of Honour, or Advantage. And if we believe all on their own sayings, we must believe all deceivers: for the rankest Impostors are true Men, if we dare trust themselves.

Ans. True, indeed, it were as unreasonable to believe all, as to believe none. But in these cases, we are to put a difference between Witnesses, and not to trust the accounts given of themselves by all, but only by credible Persons. In particular, if it appears of any Man, that he is not fanciful, false, or designing; we should be very inclinable to believe his account: especially, if God had set some extraordinary attesting marks upon him, or shewed some Miracles about him, or if he himself, which was the † *Legal Test* of Prophets, should give some extraordinary sign to gain credit. All which most eminently concur in this Testimony, which *Jesus* gave of himself, for *his being the Christ*.

† Deut. 18.
22.

Quest. Doth it appear that *Jesus* was no fanciful Man, apt to take up Opinions on slight grounds, or presume things, especially in favour of himself, without reason?

Ans. Yes, for in all his carriage, as he appeared most humble, and self-denying; so did he clearly manifest, not only a most quick and penetrating, but also a most sober, and considerate Wisdom. In all his life, he was never seen to be precipitate in any Counsels, nor presumptuous in any Conceits, nor mistaken in any Opinions and Resolutions, but could solve clearly all Questions, and shew the true weight, and just validity of all Arguments. Even they, who would not receive his Wisdom, could not but admire it, and the very Officers sent to apprehend him, returned saying, *Never man spake like*

like this man, John 7. 46. Besides, the things whereon * he builds his own Credit, are not any conjectural * Joh. 8. Speculations, or disputable Opinions, but plain matters 14. of Fact: such as his † living, and conversing with God in † John Heaven, long before he came into the world; his * coming 17. 5. out from him, and speaking what he † saw, and heard * John 16, him declare, whilst he lay from Eternal Ages in his Bosom. And these, if they are untruths, cannot be fancies, 28. & 8. but downright Forgeries, and Impostures: they argue 42. not so much an Enthusiastical, as a false and designing † John 8, Man, since no Person in his wits, as 'tis most evident he 38. was, could fanſie himself into such persuasions. And thus, it seems, the Adversaries of Jesus themselves believed. For they never once accused him, as being a deluded Enthusiast, but always as a false Impostor, who craftily invented those pretensions, which he sought to impose upon the World, Matth. 27. 63. & John 7. 12.

Quest. Was he also as apparently honest, and undesigning?

Ans. Yes, for never Man sought so little for himself; or did so much for others, making it his *meat and drink* to bring Glory unto God, and dispense Blessings to the World. Whatsoever he claimed, or did, was in pursuit of those publick ends; not at all to greaten his own secular State and Power, or to gratifie his own Will and Humour. And on this score he calls upon all Men to believe him, as one that visibly could have no temptation to deceive, and plainly sought to serve no ends of his own upon them. *My judgment is just,* saith he, *because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father, which hath sent me,* John 5. 30.

Quest. Two great things there are, which Men may seek by such pretences: *Interest*, that gratifies the covetous; and *Honour*, that Idol of the ambitious, and vain glorious. And doth it plainly appear of Jesus, that in pursuing his pretensions, he sought neither of these?

Ans. Yes, For as for *Honour*, though by his miraculous Power, he did every where the most stupendious things: yet was he never tempted to do any one out of vanity, to set on his own Praise; but only as occasion was given him by the requests, or needs of Men; or as

he saw they might serve to accomplish God's ends. Yea, after the miraculous Cures were done, he several times imposed silence on* those he cured, or on those who were privy to it, to stifle the spreading of his own Fame. He gave the Honour of all he did to God, declaring, That † of himself he could do nothing, but that his* finger wrought all the works which they so much admired, and directing them to adore, and laud him for the same, as accordingly they † did. And then, as for worldly interest, though he pretended to come as a Prince and Shepherd, yet he declared that was not to serve himself of his People, but to serve them, and to shed his Hearts Blood for them. And all Men must needs say, that he seeks no private interest, or self design, who comes among Men, only to have the opportunity to die for them. And being thus apparently free from all designs, or endeavours of seeking his own interest, or applause; upon this score he calls upon all reasonable Men to receive his Testimony. *The good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep: I am the good shepherd, for I lay down my life for them,* John 10. 11, 15. *I honour my father,* says he again, *and seek not mine own glory. He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him,* John 8. 49, 50. & 7. 18.

Quest. Indeed, such manifestations of sober Wisdom, and undesigning Integrity, are enough to gain great regard to any Man's account. But, as you said, it would be of more force still, if God, by extraordinary Providences, and miraculous Events, brought to pass for, or about a Person, should prepossess the World with a great Opinion of him, and raise in all Men some extraordinary expectations from him. And was this done for Jesus, when he came?

Ans. Yes, for, besides that a confessed Prophet was sent in God's Name, as I shewed, on purpose to declare him; a Train of Revelations, and Miracles, was laid by Almighty God, to prepare his way, and usher him in. One Angel is sent to his Mother, then and afterwards a Virgin, with the news of his Miraculous Conception; another to clear her Honour, and satisfy her jealous Husband; and a whole* Host of them are heard to sing Anthems of Joy and Praise at his Birth, declaring to the

* Luke 2. band; and a whole* Host of them are heard to sing Anthems of Joy and Praise at his Birth, declaring to the
Shep-

Shepherds, that he was *Christ the Lord*. A prodigious *Star*, of an irregular place and motion, is created to lead some great Men of the *East*, to the place where he was. Who, coming by its guidance to *Jerusalem* in search of him, put King *Herod*, and all the *Jews*, into an anxious fear and consternation. And being led on farther by it, to *Bethlehem*, to the very House where he lay, they most solemnly paid their Homage and Devotion, offering him Gifts, *Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh*. And to heighten the observation, and perpetuate the memory of these things, a strange instance of most lamentable, and unheard of cruelty accompanied them. For at the *Wise Mens* report, *Herod* growing jealous of this new King, and not being able to learn where he was, that, under pretence of going to worship, he might seize and devour him, they failing to bring him word according to their promise, through God's warning them to the contrary in a *Dream*: in his Bloody Rage he slew all the Children, under two years old, in *Bethlehem*, and all the coasts thereof, assuredly concluding he should cut him off among them. Besides all which, at the * accomplishment of his Mothers days of Purification, when he was brought into the Temple, † *Simeon* (Son, as is supposed, to the Great *Hillel*, and Father to *Gamaliel*) and * *Hannah*, two Persons eminent for Piety and Holiness, and known, though not in ordinary course, yet at some times to be acted by a *Prophetick Spirit*, which having ceased among the *Jews* for four hundred Years, ever since *Zachary* and *Malachy*, begun then to revive again, did own him for the *Christ of God*, and spoke of him to all that looked for Redemption in *Jerusalem*. All these, with a number of other great Signs shewed about him; were most publicly known among the *Jews*, and were the wonder, and discourse of that time, and must needs raise in Meps minds strange expectations from him. And seeing him thus visibly sent of God, they would be the more prepared, when he declared himself, to give him credit. Especially, when they knew him still more Gloriously set out, and all the foregoing Signs advanced and confirmed, by the visible descent of the *Holy Ghost* upon him, and the voice from Heaven accompanying it, at his *Baptism*, when he began his *Preaching*.

Matth. 2.

* Luke 2.
22.† Ver. 25,
26, &c.* Ver. 36.
37, 38, &c.

Quest. And to all this, did he also himself give them a Sign for his own justification?

Ans. Yes, and the very same too, that *Moses* prescribed for a proof of any Man's being sent of God as a Prophet, viz. his fore-telling things to come, Deut. 18. 22. For this *Jesus* did among them, and that too on this very score, according to the rule of *Moses*, to justify his Mission. His own Resurrection, under the Type of *Jonas*, he gives to the *Jews* for a sign, Matth. 12. 40. And *Judas's* Treason he foretold to his Disciples before it happened, that thereby, saith he, when it is come to pass, you may believe that I am he, John 13. 19. And this alone is a sufficient vindication of his Testimony, if he could produce nothing else. For in a Legal Trial at the Bar of *Moses*, this would prove him a true Prophet. And that being once made out, his Testimony is no further to be questioned.

Quest. Indeed, such personal endowments, and so miraculous an entry, are enough to gain credit to any Person, and make the World believe what he says, though he wrought no Miracles for confirmation.

Ans. Very true, and so they did in *John's* case. For *John*, as the Scripture says, wrought no miracle, John 10. 41. But yet he was universally held for a Prophet, because of his eminent Integrity and Wisdom, and because his Conception was by a Mother barren and past Child-bearing, and was first revealed by the Message of an Angel, and his unbelieving Father was struck dumb, and upon the child's birth, his Tongue was as miraculously loosed again to Prophecy concerning him; by all which he was notoriously known to be a Child of Miracles, though he wrought none. And all these, as I have noted, were far more eminent in *Jesus*, which therefore in all enquiry and reason should have gained him credit, and make him pass for a Prophet, as *John* did. Besides, that *Jesus* gave them Predictions, the Legal proof of true Prophets, which had been enough to authorise and justify his Witness, had it come backed with no other credentials.

Quest. You have shewn reason enough, why *Jesus's* report of himself should be trusted, since it came thus well fortified.

Ans.

Ans. Yes, this shows him a most creditable Witness, whilst he appeared among us, to testify for himself here on Earth. But besides that, he has moreover showed himself several times since he went to Heaven, particularly to *Stephen*, and *Saul*, giving them an ocular evidence, by appearing in actual Possession of his pretences. And this exhibition of himself, in Glorious Majesty at God's own Throne, doth as convincingly speak him to be *Christ the King*, as any Man's Personal appearance and presentation of himself, can prove him to be a live Person. In doubt of a thing's existing in any condition, there is no such satisfactory proof, as if the thing presents itself, and shews its state by ocular demonstration.

Quest. But after all that you have said, about the validity of this Testimony of *Jesus* in his own case, doth not *Jesus* him'self say the contrary, when he tells the Jews, *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true*, John 5. 31.

Ans. By *not true*, he means not that 'tis no real Truth, nor that it is no proof of Truth; for in another place he says expressly, *though I bear record of my self, my witness is true*, John 8. 14. But only that it will not pass in Law for a proof of Truth. And that, not for any defect in the kind, but only in the tale and number of Evidence. For *their Law*, as he notes, required *two Witnesses*. So that although his own Testimony were one good proof, yet being but one, it was of it self alone no full proof, but wanted the Testimony of *his Father* too to make it a Legal Evidence. John 8. 17, 18. And accordingly in the place objected, when he says his own is no good Testimony, in the next words he adds, *there is another that beareth witness of me*, which making up the Legal number if added to his own, would make an undeniable Testimony, John 5. 32.

Quest. But after all, will not this taking the word of *Jesus* in his own case, give colour and credit to designing Impostors, and Fanatical Enthusiasts?

Ans. It would, if he, or they were to be believed upon their bare sayings. But there is no danger at all of that, if, to back them, they must produce such Credentials, as I have set off in his case. For to be sure upon examination, they will appear, either not to be

Persons of sober and solid reason, or not exempt from all just suspicion of vanity and self-design, or to want an extraordinary and miraculous introduction. Not to mention moreover, that they will have no acknowledged Prophet to bear Witness to them, and that they will fail of giving a Sign and Prediction, which, according to the strictest Test of *Moses*, was answered and made good by him. Which great differences, make their words in their own case, to be only either a forged, or a Fanatical bold Saying, which was sober Truth, and solid Evidence in him.

Quest. Besides these Testimonies, for *Jesus* being the *Messiah*, you mentioned a *third*, viz. his *miraculous works*, which you called an Evidence drawn up by the *finger of God*. I pray you declare that.

Ans. This *Jesus* often urges for himself, and that too as of greater validity, than either *his own*, or *John's* Testimony. *I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me, John 3. 36. And if I do the works of my Father, though you believe not me, believe the works, John 10. 37, 38.*

Quest. Indeed, in pretence that any thing comes from God, Signs and Miracles are a convincing argument. For being a visible effect, as our Saviour said, of the *finger of God*, they show evidently that God espouses the Person who is impowered to work them, and will employ his Almighty Power to make his Sayings good. But one great difficulty lies in the way of this Evidence, and that is that Miracles, or things seemingly as strange as they, which we cannot distinguish from them, are oft-times wrought by *Satan* and *his Agents*. As they were by * *Jannes* and *Jambres*, the *Egyptian Magicians*, in their contest with *Moses*: and by *false Christs*, and *false Prophets*, who, as our Saviour foretold, *should shew signs and wonders*, *Matth. 24. 24.* and by the great *Antichrist* and *Man of sin*, whose coming, *S. Paul* declares, *should be after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, 2 Theff. 2. 9.* And if *Satan* works Miracles, or, which in effect is all one, what we shall take for such, to credit false Impostors, as

* 2 Tim.
3. 8.

well as God doth to justifie true Prophets; how shall we distinguish these, and know of the Signs which *Jesus* gave us, whether they are Divine Miracles, that evidence a true Man, or only Feats of Magick, which are shewn by many false Men?

Ans. They are easily distinguished, by the whole kind of some, and by the intent and design of all of them.

Quest. I pray you instance to me in some, where they are distinguished by the whole kind, That is, of some sorts of Miracles done by *Jesus*, which are peculiar to God, and which cannot be performed by any unclean Spirit.

Ans. One is foretelling future contingencies, which *Jesus* did several times. Particularly he foretold his own * death, and the strange kind of it, by hanging af- * *Matth.*
ter the Roman way upon a † Cross, which was not only 16. 21.
most accidental, but most improbable, since if he was † *Matth.*
taken off at all, it was not like to be by Roman, but by 20. 19.
Jewish malice. He foretold also that *Judas*, one of his
own Disciples, should betray him, and that before he
was given up to Satan to enter into him, or *Judas* him-
self, 'tis like, ever thought of any such thing. Nay, he
knew it, says *S. John*, from the very beginning, *John* 6:
64, 70, 71. And that *Peter* should deny him, yea, and
that just thrice, before the Cock crew twice, *Mark* 14. 30.
whereas, those three occasions of his denial, where then * *Matth.*
not only in themselves most uncertain, but at the same 24. 9, 10.
time *Peter* made so sure of his not denying him at all, † *Matth.*
that he confidently said, he would rather die with him, 24. 11, 12.
than do it in any wise, Verse 31. To these I might add, * *Matth.*
his Prediction of the Bloody * persecutions of his Disci- 28. 20. &
ples, the unhappy † success of false Prophets, the continu- 16. 18.
ance of his Church and Religion, though ever and anon
groaning under most heavy Sufferings, to the * worlds
end; with many others, † *Idoneum,*
opinor, te-

Quest. Is this Prediction of future Contingencies, a Divination, work peculiar to the All-seeing God, and above the skill of all infernal Spirits?

Ans. Yes, and thence 'tis called Divination, as † *ma-*
nifesting the Divinity of a Being. And accordingly *tull. Apol.*
herein God challenges all the pretended Gods of the Hea- c. 20.
shens;

thems; saying, *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that you are Gods*, *Isaiah 41. 23.* And this the Devils plainly manifest themselves unable to do, by the *Ambiguity* of their *Oracles*, when they are consulted in these cases. For not knowing what will be the event of things, they use artifice in words, and frame Responses of such doubtful construction, as are liable to be turned both ways, and so are equally capable of being verified by all events. Such was the noted Answer of the Devil at *Delphos*, cited by * *Cicero* from *Bunius*, which he is said to have given to *Pyrrhus* King of *Epirus*, when he consulted him about the issue of the War with the *Romans*:

* *De Divinat. l. 2.*

Nunc Aio te Arcida Romanos vincere posse.

Which, according to the different ways Men should begin the construction, was equally good *Latin*, and would be equally true, whether he should conquer the *Romans*, or they should conquer him. And such also was that other Answer, which he cites from *Herodotus*, said to be given to *Cresus* King of *Lydia*, when he went against *Cyrus*:

Cresus Halyn penetrans magnam pervertet opum vim.

That is, if he passed the River *Halys* against *Cyrus*, he should consume a vast Wealth, and waste a great Domination: which would be very true, whether it fell out to be theirs, or his own. These studiously uncertain, and ambiguous Answers, are a plain sign the *Demon* was at a *non-plus*. Besides, that future Contingencies are out of the reach, and foresight of impure Spirits, is plain, because those causes are, whereon such futurities depend. For they are wrapt up in the free-will of Men, which the Devils cannot force, but only tempt: and in the Counsel, and Providence of Almighty God, whose early determinations are bid from them, and are a secret locked up in his own Breast.

Quest. But have not *Demons* oft foretold such futurities, as when * *Spurinna* the *Augur*, by the Diabolical signs in the Sacrifice, could warn *Julius Caesar* of his danger such a day, if he went into the *Senate-House*?

* *Suet. in Jul. c. 81.*

Ans.

Ans. That the *Demon* might easily foretel, when the time, and place, and persons and other circumstances of the Murder, had been resolved on among themselves, and he had been present, and principally influenced their Debates in all their Consults. Such Predictions are but like a seasonable discovery made by some of the Conspirators.

Quest. But what say you to Predictions of more remote things, as yet unconcerted among the immediate Actors, and to their foretelling the success of attempts, or expeditions, or other futurities of contingent nature, which the *Demons* often revealed to their Prophets, both by Oracles, entrails of Sacrifices feeding of Pullen, and other ways in use among Heathen Diviners?

Ans. When they ventured at these, it was not with certainty and assurance, as infallible understandings; but only by guesses and conjectures, from the appearances of things, their preparations, and probabilities, as politick observers, wherein they can go far, by reason of their great knowledge and experience. And when they were put to Answer on these points, if they were more distrustful of the issue, they gave ambiguous and uncertain Answers, capable of being verified by all events, which would be a sure reserve for their errors, as in the case of *Crasus*, and *Pyrrhus*. But if the event seemed more likely, and they were presuming and bold enough to Answer plainly; then since the effect would several times hit, as well as sometimes miss, they hoped all would be expounded in their favour, and their mistakes salved, by the Candor and Devotion of their Worshipers.

Quest. But do not you think that *Demons* can speak of some such futurities in plain Speech, and there too with certainty and assurance?

Ans. Yes, some events are put into their hands, when any Persons are delivered to them, either for their trial, as *Job*, as for their punishment, as * *Abab*. And after such delivery, they may foretel these events, as depending upon themselves. Thus might *Satan* easily have foretold the Invasions of the † *Chaldeans* and *Sabeans*, upon *Job's* Oxen, and Camels, after he had gained God's Licence: and *Judas's* Treason, after he was delivered up to him, to * enter into him. And thus might they in the

* Luke
Gentile 22. 3.

* 1 King.

22. 22.

† Job 1.

12, 15, 17.

Gentile Divinations, foretel cures of Diseases, whereof by God's Commission they had been the Inflictors, see.

* *Apol. c. 22. so Minut. Fel. de Idol. Van. p. 29. Cypr. de Vanit. Idol.* *ming then to cure, wherethey only ceased to kill, as* Ter-tullian says. To predict such things, as are left to their Power and Ministry to accomplish, requires no more skill, than to know before-hand what they intend to do, and what are their own Decrees and Purposes. But 'tis beyond the fore-sight of any Demons to foretel such remote Contingencies, before the abandoning of Persons; as God doth frequently in the Holy Scriptures, declaring the most accidental things, which shall † happen to Men yet * unborn; or the most free and voluntary, which shall be † done by them. And as the Blessed Jesus did, and his Apostles after him by his Spirit, foretelling what should befall the whole Nation of the Jews, both young and old, after almost forty Years; and what should happen to his own Church, in remote Ages; and what should be, not only the temptations and trials, but the most contingent carriage and free actions of good Men, who were in God's Protection, and whom the impure Spirits could only tempt, not govern as is plain among many others, in that of Peter's thrice denying, and the Apostles forsaking him.*

Quest. But the famed Oracles of the Sibyls, from which * *Virgil* transcribed some Predictions, and which startled † *Cicero*, when the *Quindecevir*, who had the custody and exposition of them, were bringing out thence the news of a King into the Senate, were spoke of *Christ*, and fully verified in him, who was no abandoned Person. And did not Demons here foresee, and foretel such futurities, as depend on God, and were wrapt up, as you said, in his Counsel?

Ans. No, for very probably the Spirit that revealed those things to these *Heathen Sibyls*, was not any infernal Spirit, but the Spirit of the true God, which sometimes inspired *Heathens*, as it did * *Balaam the Aramite*, to Prophecy of several events, particularly of *Messiah*. thereby even among the *Gentile World*, to raise an expectation of him, who was to be the † *desire of all Nations*. Or, if they had it not from the Spirit of God at the first hand, yet had they it thence at the second, viz. by reading it in the *Jewish Prophets*, by whom God had before foretold these things: which is a thing not improbable,

since

since they express them sometimes in their very Forms, and Allegories. The *Demons* revealed not these things to their Prophets, or, if they did, the Prediction was not their own, but, as * *Tertullian* says, *they stole their Divination.* * *Apol. c. 22.*

Quest. The powers of darkness then, can only guess at such futurities, whose † causes are at work, and whereof they see signs and appearances, like Politicians; or discover things ready to take effect, when they have been in the club of the Actors and Conspirators; or pre-assigne what they intend to do with such, as God has delivered into their hands; or repeat Predictions, from God's true *Prophets* in the Holy Scriptures: in some one, or other whereof, did their fore-sight consist in *Heathen Divinations.* But as for the voluntary actions of all under God's Protection, and all such remote and contingent futurities, as are not determinable by natural causes, but depend upon Mens free-will, and God's free Providence, they are above their reach, so that we are sure of the true God where we have such Predictions?

Ans. Yes, and therefore it is evident *Jesus* came from God, because he, as I said, and his *Apostles* after him by his Spirit, did foretel such as these, as I have shewn in several instances.

Quest. What other Miracles did *Jesus* work, which are peculiar to God, and above the power of a wicked Spirit?

Ans. Secondly, He saw into Mens hearts and secret thoughts: discovering, before any outward proofs and manifestations thereof, the fickleness of some *Disciples*, John 2. 24. and the veil'd falshood of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, who stood as insidious Spies upon him, Luke 6. 8. and adapting his Answers, and Discourses, not only to Men's Questions, but also to their inward Thoughts and Surmizes, before they expressed and proposed them to him, as he did with the *Pharisees*, Matth. 12. 25. and in several * other places. And this is another work, which God claims as peculiar to himself, stilling himself the *searcher of hearts*, and *trier of reins*; yea, claiming the knowledge of them for this reason, which is peculiar to him, because he is to judge, and recompence them. *I the Lord search the heart, and try the reins,*

† *Vid. Aug. Lib. de Divinatione Dæmonum. Tom. 3. op. p. 844. 845. 18c. ed. Froben.*

* Luke 6. 8, 9. Matth 9.

reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings, Jer. 17. 10. And thou, even thou, only knowest the hearts of all the children of men; saith Solomon, 1 King. 8. 39.

Quest. Did Jesus any more Miracles, which are performable only by the finger of God, and are above the force of Magick?

Ans. Yes, Thirdly, He raised the dead, as † Jairus's daughter; and the * widows son of Nain, when he was carried out to be buried; and † Lazarus, after he had been four days dead. And this again is peculiarly God's work. For when once Souls are separated from their Bodies, they undergo God's Sentence, and are secured in such places as he allots to them, whence they cannot return, or be remanded, but by his Licence, and Power, that effects all things. There is no God with me, for I kill, and I make alive, saith God by Moses, Deut. 32. 39. All separate Souls are under Locks and Keys, and 'tis a Divine Hand, which holds the keys of hell and of death, Rev. 1. 18.

Quest. Have you any more instances?

Ans. Yes, Fourthly, Casting out Devils. And those not only where they were of the most stubborn sort, which had proved too * hard for his Disciples: but also where they were in greatest numbers, the Devils ejected by him out of one Man, being called by themselves Legion; which notes a Roman Army of six thousand Men, Mark 5. 9. Yea, not only expelling, but as their awful Judge, whose Rod they dread, and at whose frown they tremble, terrifying them, and forcing them often to cry out, Let us alone, thou Holy One of God, thou Son of God: we beseech thee torment us not; art thou come to torment us before the time? Mark 1. 24. Luke 8. 28. Nay, he empowered the seventy Disciples, and afterwards the very meanest of his followers, in virtue of his dreadful Name, with like Triumph to eject them, Luke 10. 17. And what is more, when some that did not adhere to him, would try to scare and controul them by his Sacred Name, the trembling Devils fled before them, Mark 9. 38. And this is another work peculiar to God, which, whatsoever some Potent Demons can, to be sure they never will, imitate. Indeed, in some particular instances, the higher Orders may command, and eject some parti-

cular

cular inferiour Spirits, and thereby serve their own designs. But to go on ejecting all Ranks and Orders, and those where they are in the greatest numbers and combinations, and that with terrors, consternation, and torments; is plainly to commence an open War among themselves, which, as our Saviour argued, must needs destroy the Devil's Kingdom, and therefore is a thing too foolish and absurd, to be imagined of intelligent, subtle, and designing Spirits, *Matth. 12. 25, 26.*

Quest. I see the Miracles of Jesus were evidently distinguished from the lying wonders of Satan, by the very kind of them in these instances. Pray now show also how they were as convincingly discriminated, by their intent and design in all others?

Ans. Because all the Miracles of Jesus were apparently wrought to exalt the honour, and service of the true God; and to promote the real good of Men; and to plant Tempers, and Practices, diametrically opposite to the way and genius of evil Spirits, aiming to root out all those Errors and Superstitions, which they had cultivated with utmost care through all former Ages, to overthrow their Altars, reduce their Worshippers, and utterly exclude them from all that Domination, which they had so long usurped among Men. And 'tis certain, that a worker of Miracles, for these Pious, Heavenly, and Charitable purposes, is not acted, or directed by wicked Spirits. For if they cease to be God's Enemies, and ours, they cease to be Devils. If they turn Preachers of Humility, Purity, the Love of God, and of one another, What becomes of their Apostasie? If they proclaim the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to be the only true God, whom we are to fear and worship, and themselves to be fallen Angels, who are no longer to be adored in Temples, hearkened to in their suggestions, nor imitated in their falshood, pride, envy, hatred of God and Men, and other practices; they turn Angels of Light, instead of being Powers of Darknes. The Devils can work no Miracles for these ends, except they should first turn Saints, and change their Natures. And therefore it was a most authentick, and assuring mark, which Jesus gave of the truth of his own Miracles, when he called them *the works his Father had given him to finish*, that is, which were not wrought for any ill ends,

nor

nor out of vanity to exalt his own Praise, but to serve the ends of God, and set on his *Father's* desires and purposes, *John 5. 36.*

Quest. Indeed, in such kinds, which seem more imitable by created powers, these intents and designs would indisputably distinguish *his signs*, from all *Satanical Delusions*.

Ans. Yes, and so I might add in the last place, would his *manner of performance* too. For his usual way of working wonders, was not by any Magical Rites, and Invocations, but merely by a Word of his Mouth. *To the wind, and sea, he said, peace, and it was still. Mark 4. 39. to the deaf man's Ears, Be opened, and instantly he heard, Mark 7. 34, 35. to the blind man, Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee see, and without more ado he saw again, Mark 10. 52. to the leper, I will, Be thou cleansed, and his leprosie was cured, Luke 5. 13.* Which way of effecting things, by an all-commanding Word, is as plain an evidence of a Divine Power, as Creating all things was at first: for then God only said, *Let there be light, and there was light, Gen. 1. 3. he only spake, and it was done, he commanded, and it stood fast, Psalm 33. 9.* Not to mention moreover, the vast Number of his Miracles, which more assuredly inferred a Divine Power in him, than in any, nay in all the *Prophets* put together, who lived before him. For whereas the *Jews*, when, to exalt *Moses* and the *Prophets*, they ambitiously make the most of their Miracles, after they have picked up all they can, compute all his only at 76. and all theirs from the beginning of the World to the destruction of the Temple only at 74. which both together make but 150. in above 3000 Years time: this single *Jesus*, in three Years wrought so many, *that were they all written, the world it self would not be able to contain the Books, that should be written of them, John 21. 25.* To all which I might add, lastly, That he did not only show these great, and numerous signs himself in Person; but transmitted the Power to Numbers to do the same in his Name, and conferred this Power on *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, which are things utterly unknown among all the wonder-workers of former times.

Quest. But in this point one thing sticks still with the *Jews*, which is, that *Jesus* and his *Apostles*, in credit of their

their Miracles, went about to overthrow the Law of *Moses*. And may not they therefore confront all the Miracles wrought in justification of that Law, against theirs?

Ans. They might, to one that accused that Law as forged, or erroneous. Which *Jesus* was so far from doing, that he all along makes *Moses* and the *Prophets* his Vouchers, telling the *Jews*, *had you believed Moses, you would have believed me, for he wrote of me*, John 5. 46. and *search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me*, verse 39.

Quest. But did not those Miracles, when they proved that Law to come from God, prove also that none should come in after-time, to abrogate and annul it?

Ans. No, but on the contrary the Holy Prophets under that Law, declared it should be changed, and all those things subverted, whereto it was adapted; and which were the ground and foundation of it.

Quest. To what things was the *Jewish* Law adapted?

Ans. Their *Moral* Laws, contained in the *Ten Commandments* were adapted, not to the particular state and circumstances of any place or People, but of the common humane Nature, and therefore were unchangeable. And accordingly, when our Saviour comes to meddle with them, he declares it was *not to destroy* or vacate them, *but to fulfil* and add what was wanting in them, *Matth.* 5. 17, 18. But their *Judicial* Laws, which prescribed the Rules of Courts and Judgments, were fitted to their external Polity, as they were a civil State in *Canaan*. And as for their *Ceremonial* Laws, which order'd the Rules of their Religion and Worship, to omit other specialties therein, that chief part of them about *Sacrifices*, was all to be administered by *one Family*, viz, † *Aaron's line*, and was limited to *one place*, viz. the * *temple of Jerusalem*.

Quest. And did the Holy Prophets under that Law, foretel any change in that *Priesthood*, *Temple-worship*, and *Civil State*, or talk of any new settlement of things, independent on them, or inconsistent with them?

G

Ans.

† *Exod.*
28. 1. &
1 *Chron.*
22. 13.
* *Deut.* 12.
11. 13, 14.
& *John* 4.
20.

Ans. Yes. In the last days, a known Phrase for the days of Messiah, the mountain of the Lord's house, says *Isaiah*, shall be established in the top of the mountains, and all nations shall flow unto it, *Isaiah* 2. 2. God's Name shall be great among the Gentiles, from the rising to the setting of the sun, in every place shall incense be offered to his Name, and a pure offering: which cannot consist with Worshipping still in one appropriate place, viz. the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, *Mal.* 1. 11. A new Priest-hood shall be erected, says the Psalmist, in the days of Christ, not after the order of Aaron, but of Melchisedech, *Psalm* 110. 4. and then shall God take to himself Priests and Levites out of other nations, no longer confining his choice to Aaron, and his Sons, *Isaiah* 66. 19, 20, 21. a plain sign the Law was to cease, when the Priest-hood was, which had the Ministrations of it, *Heb.* 7. 12. About Messiah's time, says the Prophet Daniel, shall God destroy the city, and make an utter desolation, the Scepter too departing, as

**Gen.* 49. 10. * Jacob foretold, when once Shilo was come: and what place then for their Judicial Laws, when they were no longer to be a Nation, nor have any Established Polity, to administer, and judge by them? He shall also destroy the Sanctuary; and what then becomes of all the Sacrifices, when once the place was demolished, wherein the Law required they should all be offered? *Dan.* 9. 26, 27. In summ, they declare, as I noted before, that God would set aside the Mosaic Covenant, by reason of its insufficiency, and give them a new, and better Covenant in its place. And that he would make this change at that time, when a woman should compass a man, which plainly notes the days of Messiah, *Jeremiah* 31. 22. 31, 32, &c.

Quest. Indeed, these are plain proofs, that the Law of Moses was designedly subject unto change in Messiah's days. And if Jesus abrogates it, as they foretold he should, 'tis evident he ought not to be looked upon as opposing the Old Prophets, for accomplishing their own Predictions?

Ans. Most certainly, but is therein owned and vouch'd by them, as he was in the event too by God himself, when by the confusion of Tribes, and destruction of the Temple and Commonwealth, by *Vespasian*, he plainly set aside those Laws, by rendering them impossible, and leaving

no more place for them. Their *Civil* or *Judicial* Laws, about *Buying and Selling*, *Succession into Estates*, *Reparation of Damages*, *Punishments of Offences*, and other things, are plainly now of no force, having never since then had any standing Polity, or live-Power to put them in Execution. The Laws fixing the *Priesthood in Aaron's line*, and directing their Ministration, have been evidently superseded ever since that Line was utterly undistinguishable, and irrecoverably unknown. The Laws and Ceremonies about *Sacrifices*, which were all determined to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, have been apparently out of doors, ever since the Temple was brought to ruin. And those many other Laws observed by learned Men, to be made with a *limited Obligation* to the *Land of Canaan*, are manifestly taken off, since God has irreversibly banished them from thence, and scattered them abroad in every Nation. So that all these Laws are visibly abrogated by God himself, and fallen on course, with the loss of their Country, and of the distinction of Tribes, and with the fall of the Civil State and Temple, which were their Foundation.

Quest. But do not some places speak the perpetuity of some of those Laws, as when the * *Passover*, and the * *Exod.* Precept of † *First fruits*, and several others, are called 12. 17. a *Statute for ever*? And how can these admit of such † *Lev.* 23. change? 14.

Ans. Just as the *Priesthood* did, which was said to minister to God for ever, *Deut.* 18. 5. & 1 *Chron.* 15. 2. And as the *Temple*, wherein God says he will take up his rest for ever: which yet, we all know, for above Sixteen hundred Years has been utterly destroyed, *Psal.* 132. 14. *Perpetual Statutes*, and *unalterable*, are two things. Those are *perpetual*, which are made without an express limitation of time, and which must last, till the same Power repeals that enacted them. And thus some Statutes in *Moses's Law* are stiled *perpetual*, not to exclude all Power of Abrogation, but in opposition to some other Pendent Statutes, that were not to oblige till after a certain time, as the Law of † *driving out the Canaanites*, which was not to be of force, till they came among them. Or to some, that obliged only in some certain state and condition: as the Statute for * *going without the camp*, which related to their State of Pere-
† *Exod.* 23. 31. &
Num. 33. 52.
* *Deut.* 23. 12,
gri-

- † Exod. 40. grination ; and the Statutes about the † *Tabernacle*, which was to last only till God chose out a place, where they should build him a *Temple*. But among them, those things especially were said to *be for ever*, which were to *continue to the end of any thing*, or last out the *whole course of any period of time*, and till a new Revolution. Thus it is said of *Samuel*, that he was brought to * *abide before the Lord for ever*, that is, all his Lifetime ; as in the form of our Law, an Estate is said to be granted and bequeathed to a Man *for ever*, when it is given him for his life : and a *Servant* was said in the † Law to be *for ever*, who was to serve only *till the next* * Lev. 25. * *Jubilee*, which was a time of general Release, and begun a new reckoning. And thus the Law of *Moses* did last *for ever*, that is, it lasted to the end of that State whereto it was adapted, continuing till *Christ* came, whose time was the beginning of a new Age, commonly known and expressed in the *Jewish* Phrase, by the † *last* † Mic. 4.1. *days*, and the * *last time*, and the † *world to come*. Besides, all the Typical part of that Law, being only in the * I Pet. 1. 20. Nature of an obscure Prophecy, which was a * *School-master to bring us to Christ*, by shadowing out the good things to come by him ; it was superseded of course by his fulfilling of them, as all Predictions are by their Accomplishment and Consummation.

Quest. By this I perceive, there is no clashing in designs between our *Jesus*, and *Moses* and the *Prophets*. And when he set aside that Law, it was only as they hoped, and foretold he should, by consummating and fulfilling whatsoever is prefigured, and clearing up what it obscured, and supplying what it omitted, and by substituting a better Law in its place.

Ans. Very right. And therefore all the *Old Testament* Miracles do not in the least oppose, but fortifie and confirm his. So that, as he told the *Jews*, if they really believed *Moses*, that would lead them to believe him ; but if they rejected him, that very *Moses*, in whom they trusted, would accuse them, John 5. 45, 46.

Quest. By what you have said, 'tis plainly evident, that the *Miracles* which *Jesus* wrought, were done by the finger of God : and then, that naturally follows, which he thereupon infers, therefore no doubt

doubt the kingdom of God is come unto you, Matth. 12. 28, 29.

But one *Divine Testimony* you mentioned besides all these, for proving *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, and that was the *Testimony of the Father*: pray make that clear?

Ans. This *Testimony* *Jesus* alledges in his own behalf, as an additional evidence to the former *Testimony* of his works. *The same works that I do, bear witness of me. And the Father also himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me,* John 5. 36, 37, & chap. 8. 17, 18.

Quest. But since we are upon Earth, and the *Father* in Heaven, and he doth not visibly appear to converse among Men, how did he give *Testimony* to him?

Ans. I shall mention two ways: First, by audible voices. *Ye have not at any time heard his voice,* says *Jesus* to the Jews, when he mentions his Father's Witness, John 5. 37. Secondly, By raising him from the Dead, and showing him openly in full possession of his pre-
sences.

Quest. Was God the *Father* ever heard to say, *Jesus is the Christ*, and declare for him by audible Voices?

Ans. Yes, several times. He appeared cloathed with Light and Brightness, the usual visible Symbol of his presence, as he did of old to *Moses* at the Bush, and thence gave a vocal *Testimony* to *Jesus*, in as plain and intelligible words, as before he had used to *Moses*, or as we can use in giving *Testimony* to one another. This he did first at his *Baptism*, before *John the Baptist*, saying, *This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased,* Matth. 3. 17. And again at his *Transfiguration*, before three of his *Apostles*, *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, when out of the bright cloud a voice came, saying, *This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him,* Matth. 17. 1, 5. Which Voice, saith *S. Peter*, from the excellent Glory of God the *Father*, we heard, when we were with him in the Holy mount, and were eye-witnesses of his Majesty, 2 Pet. 1. 16, 17, 18. And the same he repeated again a third time before a Multitude, when *Andrew* and *Philip* brought the *Greeks* to him. For before them all, *Jesus* Prayed, *Father, Glorifie thy Name.* And thereupon came a voice from heaven, saying, *I have both*

glorified it, and will glorifie it again, John 12. 28. And this is a most sensible, and satisfactory way of God's declaring himself, not meerly by shows and resemblances of things, which are expressed by Visions and Dreams upon Mens imaginations, but by plain, proper, and significant words, such as he used in conversing with Adam in paradise, Genesis 3. 8, 9. and with Moses at the bush, Exodus 3. 4. when, assuming a Glorious Light, the usual way of shewing himself particularly present, he spoke to Men out of it, in an audible Voice, as sensibly, and intelligibly, as a Man can talk and discourse with his Friend.

Quest. Did the Father also testifie Jesus to be the Christ, by raising him from the Dead, and shewing him openly in full possession of his pretences?

Ans. Yes, on the third day, he rose again, as we profess in the Creed. And Almighty * God, as S. Peter saith, raised him up. And hereby he did plainly testifie, and vouch for him. For after the Jews had done their worst, condemning, and cruelly executing him: in raising him up again, God visibly reversed their Sentence and undid what they had done, and justified him as one that deserved not to continue under the Power of Death, but to live again. He was put to Death in the Flesh, but justified in the Spirit, viz. by that Divine Spirit, which raised him from the Dead, 1 Tim. 3. 16. He was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead, Rom. 1. 4. Nay, after his Resurrection, he set him in Heaven, at his own right Hand, surrounded with a Divine Glory, the usual Symbol of God's Presence and Majesty. In which august form, he shewed him to * Stephen, to prepare him for his Martyrdom; and to † Saul, at his Conversion; Jesus appearing to them from God's right Hand, in a Glory that surpassed the Brightness of the Sun. And having enthroned him there, he intrusted him with the Holy Ghost, to dispose of it as he pleased; a plain Evidence of his having all Power in Heaven, as well as on Earth, as he pretended. Which Power he visibly manifested to all Men, not only by sending down the Holy Spirit, in all variety of most stupendious Gifts, upon his own Apostles; but enabling them, by imposition of Hands in his Name, to confer the same upon innumerable.

* Act. 2.

24, 32.

* Act. 7.

55.

† Act. 26.

13, 14, 16.

ble Multitudes of his followers, as appears from the *Acts* of the *Holy Apostles*, and from other *Scriptures*.

Quest. I will not ask you for any more Evidence in this great point, of *Jesus being the Christ*: such demonstrations, as you have insisted on, being abundantly sufficient to gain belief from every honest mind, that is, careful to inquire, and willing to be informed. And as for others, who are wantonly captious, or wilfully blind and incredulous, they are not to be convinced by Reason and Arguments.

But building on this now, as most unquestionably sure, That *Jesus is the Christ*, doth not that undeniably prove the *Divine Authority of the New Testament*, which is his Word?

Ans. Most certainly it doth. For that contains only what he either spoke, or acted himself in his Life; or ordered his *Apostles* to do, and teach in his Name, after his Death. The same Proofs and Testimonies, which justify him, do authorize it; since it only sets out to us all that Word, in declaration whereof all the Evidences urged hitherto are to gain him credit.

Quest. I am fully satisfied of the certainty, and have heard enough to convince me of the usefulness, and efficacy of *Faith in Christ*. I would desire now to hear something more of the particular points of that Faith, whereof we are to be thus firmly persuaded, and whereby such admirable things are to be performed.

Ans. Thole, as I hinted at first, are summed up in that *short Creed*, into the profession whereof we are all Baptized. And that I shall next endeavour to discourse on, and explain to you.

THE
Knowledge of GOD:
OR, AN
EXPLICATION
OF THE
Divine Attributes,
AND
PROVIDENCE.

THE
KNOWLEDGE OF GOD
OR AN
EXPLICATION
OF THE
DIVINE ATTRIBUTES
AND
PROVIDENCE

The Knowledge of God : or , an Explication of the Divine Attributes and Providence.

CHAP. I.

Of the Being, and Attributes of God.

The Contents.

The World declares there is a God. He is an eternal Spirit, on whom all things depend. Of God's Holiness. Several things explained, which seem to infringe it : as when God is said to harden Mens hearts. To inflict Spiritual blindness, and a reprobate sense. To send a false Spirit to deceive Ahab : and strong delusion. God oft gives Men up to the delusion of evil Spirits. Cautions to prevent this. To give Men a Spirit of slumber. An account, how notwithstanding God's irreconcilable hatred of sin, it is still suffered in the World. Of God's Goodness. Several false Notions of it. In what things it chiefly consists, Of God's Justice, or Righteousness, This shown in giving Righteous Laws, and passing Righteous Judgments according to them, without respect of Persons. His Punitive Justice cleared from misplacing punishments, in punishing one for another's sins, And from misproportioning them, in allotting eternal punishments, to momentary sins. Some false aspersions on this just God wiped off. Of God's Presence in all places. The effect of this. Of his Faithfulness. This shown by inviolable performance of his Promises : And interpreting them without evasion, or secret reserve, according to their plain meanings. And by constant adherence to his Friends and Faithful Servants : which is

no encouragement for any to return to their former sins. Of God's Wildom. This shown in setting a just rate and estimate on all things; so that he is neither gained, nor lost by worthless services. In discerning the just power and force of all Means, and success of all Methods; which should beget the greatest Reverence for all his Ordinances. In seeing the best times, and seasons, for every purpose: so that we must never think any Deliverance too long delayed, or Affliction too fast hastened. No reason to pretend to the Love of God, without loving, and imitating these Divine Excellencies.

Question. **W**hat are the Articles of Christian Faith, or particular points, which we Christians are to believe?

Answer. They are all contained in this Creed, commonly called the *Apostles Creed*; I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth. And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into Hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right Hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the Holy Catholick Church; the Communion of Saints; the Forgiveness of Sins; the Resurrection of the Body; and the Life Everlasting. Amen.

Quest. Doth this Creed contain all points of Doctrine, necessary to be believed by every Christian?

Ans. Yes, for it was given for a Confession of Faith, that should fit Men for Baptism, and shew any Person to be a Christian: and they had better have made no Rule, or Confession of Faith at all, than an imperfect one.

Quest. What do you make the first Article in this Creed?

Ans. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth.

Quest. How doth it appear that there is a God?

Ans.

Ans. From this vast World, that he has made. Even as we are unquestionably assured of the Being of a Skilful Architect, where we see a stately, and well contrived House erected; or of a learned Author, from an excellent, and well-penned Book; or of an Ingenious Artificer, from a Watch of exact, and various Movements, or other elaborate, and curious piece of Workmanship. And this shows us, not only that there is a God, on whom we and all this created World depend: but also that he is most Wise, Powerful, and Good; because the greatest Power, Wisdom and Goodness, are every where apparent in the contrivance, and formation of it. For the invisible things of God, even his eternal Power and Godhead, are clearly seen from the Creation of the World, being understood by the things that are made, as S. Paul says, Rom. 1. 20.

Quest. Indeed, nothing in reason seems more obvious, than that all this World must have an Architect; and that we and all the things about us, which every where spring up and perish, could never make our selves; and that things of such admirable Order, Harmony, and Usefulness, could not any one, and much less all of them, be put together by blind and uncontriving chance. And therefore, methinks, this proof of God's Being, from the voice of his Works, must needs convince all his reasonable Creatures?

Ans. Yes, and ever since the World began, so it has. There is neither speech nor language, where their voice is not heard: their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world, Psal. 19. 3, 4.

On this, or other Arguments, all People, in every Age, and Nation, believed, and acknowledged that there is a God, and delivered down that Belief to those who followed them. And therefore no Person can ever oppose this, and pretend to reason, since thereby, he sets up himself against all People of every place and time, and against what passed for the plainest, and most uncontestable Principle of humane reason, ever since there was any such thing. So that if therein he has reason, he has it to himself alone, and all the present World besides, yea, and all Ages too that went before him, had none.

Quest.

Quest. What things are we to know, and believe concerning God?

Ans. First. His God-head, and Divine Attributes. Secondly, His Providence.

Quest. There is nothing in all Religion more necessary, or useful for us, than to have a right apprehension of Almighty God. Is he like any thing, which we behold with our Eyes, or feel with our Hands, or discern by any Bodily Senses?

Ans. No; in Scripture, indeed, he is said to have Ears, and Eyes, and Hands and Feet. But therein, as the Jewish Rabbins say, the Law speaks of God with the Tongue of the Children of Men. And we are to understand, not that he has any such parts, but only that he has as full perceptions, and performs the same things, as we do by them. The invisible God, whom no man hath seen, or can see, 1 Tim. 6. 16. is a Spirit, says our Saviour, John 4. 24. And this must teach us in all our Services, which we pay to him, never to think of putting him off with outward Shows, Gifts, and Ceremonies; but to be inwardly affected in all we do, or say, and always to offer him our Hearts, and Spirits: For he being a Spirit, must be worshipped, as Christ, said, in spirit and in truth, John 4. 24. And moreover, never to make any Bodily Images, and representations of him; or fancy to give him Worship, and Honour by them: since a pure unbodied Spirit, is not represented, but * be-

* Rom. 1. 23, 25. *Ye saw † no manner of similitude of God, when he*
 II. 44. 20. *came and spake to you, said Moses to the Jews, there-*
 † II. 40. 18. *fore take good heed, lest ye corrupt your selves in making any of him, Deut. 4. 15, 16. And thou shalt not make to thee any likeness, of any thing, either in Heaven, or Earth, to bow down to them, said the Law Exod. 20. 4, 5.*

Quest. But although we cannot see him with our Eyes, yet we may apprehend several things of him in our minds. And one, you say, is his God-head: what mean you by that?

Ans. His Sovereignty, or being the Supreme Being, that depends on none, and that all other things depend upon. Particularly Men, who were at first made by him,

him, and still absolutely depend on him. *In him we live, move, and have our being*, Act. 17. 28.

Quest. If he depends on none, he must be an eternal Being, which never had beginning?

Ans. Yes because there was nothing before him, to give beginning to him. So that if he had not been from all Eternity, he could never have been at all.

Quest. And if all things else, but especially all Men, do absolutely depend on him, that will make all careful to serve and please him, and found Religion?

Ans. Undoubtedly so it should. And where it is not only believed, but seriously laid to heart, so it will.

Quest. What are the *Divine Attributes*, or Properties of God, which will show us how he stands affected, and what will please him?

Ans. He is all *Holiness, Goodness, Justice, Faithfulness, Wisdom, Almighty, every where present*, and can never change.

Quest. What is meant by God's *Natural Purity* and *Holiness*.

Ans. His absolute exemption from all sin in himself, and his perfect averſation, and immutable hatred of it in all others. He can take no pleasure in wickedness; he hates all workers of iniquity, and therefore evil shall not dwell with him, *Psalm*. 5. 4, 5.

Quest. If this be his unalterable Nature, he can never be reconciled to Mens sins, nor take delight in any Man, whilst he goes on to be a sinner?

Ans. No; as soon may we hope to bring Light and Darkness, Snow and Fire to dwell together. So far is he from living with it, that he cannot endure to look upon iniquity, *Habak.* 1. 13.

Quest. Since God's Holiness bespeaks such absolute abhorrence of all vice and wickedness, I see it implies something more, than barely his affectation of External Decency, or his hatred to be treated rudely and unmanly.

Ans. Yes, so it doth. It implies that too. For God's Holiness, † often notes his supereminent Power, and Greatness. And to use his peerless Majesty, or any things appropriated to it, without that separate Honour, *Habak.* 1. and visible Reverence, which is due to them, is to un-

ballow

ballow and prophane him; which he says in *Ezekiel* the Priests did, when they put no difference between the holy and prophane, *Ezek. 22. 26.* Our great, and matchless Creator, must have a distinguishing respect, and honour, visibly paid him in our outward behaviour. And when in *Gifts* and *Presents*, some would shew visible neglect, and dishonour of him; he complained that they did not treat him as a *Great, and Dreadful King*: adding, that herein their undutifulness might evidently appear, because they durst not go so, to pay respect to any Temporal Governour or Superiour, *Mal. 1. 8, 13, 14.* But, though this hatred of *External irreverence*, be one thing implied in it; yet is it but the outside of God's Holiness. And therefore no Man must ever think to content him, by Ceremonious Formalities, as being extreme nice and scrupulously careful about the Place, the Garb, the Posture, or other decent Dress, or circumstance of his Worship and Service; except at the same time he shun all sin and wickedness, which affront him most of all, and bear the directest opposition to his Holiness. As this without the other, is *Spiritual ill Breeding, and Clownish Rusticity*: so is the other without it, mere Form and Complement, and an empty unprofitable Ceremony.

Quest. If this Holy God is so irreconcilably set against sin, sure he can never be the Author of it?

Ans. No; let no Man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither doth he tempt or incite any man to it, *James 1. 13.* The Devil tempts us, who is called the Tempter in the Scriptures, *Matth. 4. 3.* And wicked men, who are his Instruments. And our own Lusts most of all, when they draw us away, and intice us to evil, as *S. James* says, *James 1. 14.* But as for the most Holy God, the concern he hath about our sins, is in no wise to decree, or help them on, but only to forbid, and punish them. He has no pleasure in wickedness, or, as the * *Sepruagint* translate it, he doth not will it, *Psal. 5. 4.*

*Οὐκ ὀφείλει
ἀγαθὸν
μὴ εἶναι

Quest. But doth not God himself say, That he had hardened Pharaoh's heart, and the heart of his servants, *Exod. 10. 1. and Chap. 14. 4, 17.* and is it not also said, that he moved David to number Israel, and Judah; *2 Sam. 24. 1.*

Ans.

Ans. Yes, but God did these, not by way of positive influence and efficiency, as a concurrent cause; but only by withdrawing his Grace, and leaving Men to be hardened by their own Lusts, and by evil Spirits. And thus of *Pharaoh* 'tis said, that *he hardened his own heart*, Exod. 8. 15, 32. and of *David*, that *Satan moved him to number the people*, 1 Chron. 21. 1.

Quest. But doth not his withdrawing of his Grace, show a willingness to have sin take place, and that although he is loth to do it himself, yet he is free, Men should be hardened by others?

Ans. No; 'tis only when he is put to it as a Wise, and upright Judge, in way of Justice. For he never withdraws his Grace, and thereby leaves Men to their own Lusts, and malignant Spirits, till they have first made a forfeiture of it, by reiterated repulses and affronts, or some high provocations. Thus in the Story of *Pharaoh* in *Exodus*, (except what is said, Chap. 7. 13. *he hardened Pharaoh's heart*, which, as the * Learned *Dr. Hammond's Annotations* on Rom. 9. 18 note, may as well be rendred *Pharaoh's heart was hardened*, as the same word is rendred *verse 22.*) God is not said thus to *harden Pharaoh's heart*, and send all his plagues upon his heart, chap. 9. 12, 14. till *Pharaoh* had several times wickedly disobeyed, and wilfully *hardened his own heart*, chap. 8. 15, 32. And when 'tis said, that *God moved David to number the People*, 'tis added, that their sins had provoked him to *Anger*, which made him give him up to it, 2 Sam. 24. 1. God's Grace and Holy Spirit, is always repulsed and driven away, before he recalls it from Men, and thereby gives them up to an evil Lust, or an infernal Spirit, to harden, and work in them.

Quest. What say you when God threatens Men with *Spiritual Blindness*, that they shall *look on without seeing*, and *hear without understanding*, Isaiah 6. 9. Which Judgment *S. Paul* testifies, was *befallen the unbelieving Jews*, Rom. 11. 7, 25. As our Lord himself also noted, *Matth.* 13. 14, 15.

Ans. Not that he instils into them any errors, or pushes and precipitates them on to any wicked act, without opening their Eyes. But only that he leaves them to their own violent and blind prejudices, which will neither let them hear, nor see any thing, that makes a

gainst them : and withdraws clear means of knowledge, after they have long slighted, and abused them ; as our Saviour did from the *blinded Jews*, therefore, as he says, *speaking to them in Parables, because seeing they saw not, and hearing they heard not*, that is, they would not be made to see, and hear, by plain Speeches, *Matth. 13. 13.* This infliction of Spiritual blindness, *S. Paul*, in the case of the *Romans*, calls giving up to a reprobate sense, *Rom. 1. 28.* Whereto God then gave them up, when he justly left them to it, after they of themselves had already gone far in wickedly contracting it. *Whilst they knew God*, they gave him no due glory and acknowledgment ; and thereupon he gave them over to a reprobate mind, ver. 21, 28. Their reprobate sense, ver. 28. was the woful consequent of their own foul lusts, and precontracted foolishness, noted verse 21, 23, 25, 26. God did not leave them, till, by false worship and filthy practices, they had first, not only deserted, but driven him, and his enlightening Spirit, away from them.

Quest. But what say you to *Abab's case*, did not God himself deceive him ?

Ans. No ; but only left him to be deceived by a wicked Spirit ; and that not till *Abab* had sold himself to work wickedness, and thereby most justly deserved to be deserted by him. The wicked Spirits, though they have will enough to hurt us, yer are held in Chains and Fetters, and are not let loose, or in power to work their wills, till they have God's Licence. And therefore when the good Angels, from their several earthly charges, return back to God to make their reports, some wicked ones, as 'tis represented in the Story of *Joh*, still croud in among them, to gain Commissions, either for trial or punishment, and see who will be delivered into their hands. Thus *Satan* did, when he obtained power against *Joh*, for a trial of his patience, *Job 1. 6.* And thus on another set day, when God publickly decreed the fall of *Abab*, an evil Spirit presents himself, and voluntarily offers to be a lying Spirit in the mouth of all his Prophets, to encourage him to his fall at *Ramoth Gilead*, in deserved punishment of his wickedness. And God not only foretels, that *Abab* would hear him ; but bids him go, and do so, as * *Christ* bid *Judas* when he went out to betray him, (as also the † *Devils*, when they entred into

* *Joh* 13.

27

† *Matth. S.*

32.

the herd of swine,) not thereby commanding and authorizing his Practice, but only taking off his restraint, and letting him loose to his own wicked purposes, by way of permission and sufferance, 1 King 22. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Quest. And is that S. Paul's meaning, when under the great mystery of iniquity, or Man of sin, he says, God shall send men, who loved not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, strong delusion, 2 Theff. 2. 11.

Ans. Yes, that delusion was to be, by giving evil Spirits Licence to delude them. It shall come with all deceivableness of power, and signs, and lying wonders, after the working of Satan, verse 9, 10. So that God's sending strong delusion in those days, is letting Satan loose, and permitting him to give plausible proofs, and shows, to seduce Men. Which, with those that loved unrighteousness, and had no love for the truth, but would be glad of any pretence to embrace a pleasing error instead of it, would be like enough to prevail.

Quest. Doth God often give Men up thus to evil Spirits, to delude them?

Ans. Yes, evil Spirits have a general influence, in producing the errors, as well as the sins and transgressions of all Men. But they have often a more especial Licence, and extraordinary power of delusion, in degree sometimes greater, and sometimes less, according as any Persons, or Places, through their own wickedness, their pride, and wantonness, are left more or less to themselves, and thrown out of God's protection. Thus the darkness of the Heathen World or * Age, S. Paul ascribes to the spiritual wickednesses in high or † heavenly places, or to the * wicked Spirits in the Air called Heaven in the Jewish Books, who were the Rulers of it, Eph. 6. 12. And in account of the deluded nations, we are told, that the old Serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, had deceived them, Rev. 20. 2, 3, 8. And the general Apostasie and Delusion, by the Man of sin, is ascribed by the Apostle, as I noted, to the working of Satan, 2 Theff. 2. 9, 10, 11. And on the rising of any notable Hereticks, and perverters of the truth, the crafty and malignant Devil is usually said to stir, and rage, in the Ecclesiastical Language. The great deceits and delusions of the World, are not owing only to the darkness of Mens

* Διὸν ©.
† Ενεργα-
ντων.
* Πνευμα-
τικὰ ἢ
οὐρανοῦς
or as the
Syriack
Version
reads it,
π. σὺματα

own minds and hearts; but to the malignant fraud of wicked Spirits, who by themselves, and their Instruments, miserably blind and mislead such, as are forsaken of God, and delivered into their hands. And therefore it need not seem strange to us, if we see Men abused into such gross absurdities, as are against the plainest Scriptures, Reason, and common Sense. Nay, though they be as confident of them, as if they received them by *immediate inspiration*, and a *voice from Heaven*; and think they have as sure *Revelations*, for their *senseless*, and *absurd Dreams*, as ever the *blessed Apostles*, and *Evangelists* had for the *Holy Scriptures*. For though several of these seem too gross, for the natural folly of Men; yet are they not so for the malignity of a delusive Dæmon. When he has gained a Licence to besot, and abuse Mens minds, we need not stand astonished at the most extravagantly senseless, or ridiculous Opinions.

Quest. If this is one method of God's Justice, to give up those, who abuse the Light, and the means thereof, to *Satan's delusion*; must not this make us all exceeding careful, with Humility, and Reverence, to keep in his ways and appointments, that so we may abide under his Protection?

Ans. Most certainly. And therefore by all means we must have a care, not to set our selves above Ordinances, to vilifie Prayers or Preaching, to despise Sacraments, to disparage the Sacred Scriptures, to contemn superciliously and outbrave our Ministers, making our selves wiser than our Teachers, to cast off the Government of our Lawful Pastors, or break the Unity of the Church, or such things. For this is breaking all God's Bounds, and discarding his Methods, appointed to keep us all stable, in the knowledge, and practice of the Truth. And if we thus leave him, and wantonly leap out of all his ways, we have just cause to fear, lest he leave us: and then we are ready to become a prey to evil Spirits, who, as they get leave in more or less degrees, will carry us away with their delusions.

Quest. You think then, that there is less danger of these delusions, whilst Men keep humbly, and awfully, in the Unity and Communion of *Christ's Church*, than when they depart from it?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, by breaking out thence, they are got into a place more incure, and more full of danger. As out-lying Deer, no more under the Eye and Care of the Keeper, are ready to become a prey to every Hunter. Or, as Sheep without the Fold, whilst they straggle from the Flock, and out of the compass of that special Providence which protects them, are in danger by every hurtful Beast to be made a prey, and picked up. Or, as near an Enemies Quarters, they who will run abroad without the Camp, are in danger of being seized, or slain by Adversaries: so are Men without the Church, by evil Spirits. For they are more at liberty, and less loosed in the World, though chain'd up and fetter'd in the Church; and if they find any to have leap'd out thence, they are more likely to seize them, as strays in their own Dominions.

Quest. Indeed, that which restrains their malice, is the Protection of God, which is called *the Hedge*, that fenced off Satan from Job, Job 1. 10. And since all have not an equal share in the Guardianship of Almighty God, and of his good Angels, 'tis obvious to infer, that these impure Spirits have more power in some Places, and over some Persons, than over others.

Ans. Yes, and this the Demon in * *Tertullian* urged * *De Spectac.* c. 26.

for himself, who being charged by some, who in those days of Miracles came to eject him, and rebuked for daring to attempt, and possess a Christian Woman, who was lifted under Christ's Protection, constantly pleaded, that his seizure was most just, because he found her in his own Precincts, viz. at the lewd, bloody, and ungodly shows, in the Heathen Theatres. † This

Power of evil Spirits, is greatest in the unhallowed World; as the Scripture sufficiently intimates, when Satan is called by our Lord, the Prince of this world, John 12. 31. and chap. 14. 30. and 16.

11. and by S. Paul, the God of this world, 2 Cor. 4. 3. and when the Apostle ascribes the darkness of the Heathen world, to wicked spirits, who had the rule and Empire of it, Eph. 6. 12. and wrought in those that were disobedient, or the * unpersuadable part of Man-kind, Eph. 2. 2. So that they are able to do most, and before Men are entred into the Covenant, and Church.

of God: as from the danger which Moses was in, before he had Circumcised his Son, the Jewish Doctors note the Power of a destroying Angel on such as have not received the initiatory Rite of Circumcision; answerable whereto is that old Tradition among them, that God exempted their Nation from the Power of the Angel of death, to which he subjected the rest of the World, when he chose them for his own People; and gave them the Law. Or when, being once enter'd, they either burst out of it themselves; or by just excommunication, which, as our Lord says, brings Men back into the state of the Heathen, are cast out into the World again. For then, the Devils obtain more Power over them. And this S. Paul notes, when he says of those who grow turbulent in the Church, and oppose themselves, that they are taken captive by him, 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26. And when he calls excommunication, a delivering over unto Satan; viz. as it throws them out into his Territory, and within the verge of his Dominion, 1 Cor. 5. 5. & 1 Tim. 1. 20. And this is no new Inference and interpretation, but the Ancient understanding and Explication of that expression. Being cast out from the Congregation of the Faithful, and cut off from the Flock, the Person said to be delivered to Satan, became naked, and destitute, and so exposed to Wolves. For as the Pillar of cloud, covered the Camp of the Hebrews; so doth the Grace of the Holy Spirit, protect the Church, † says S. Chrysostom in his Explication of the Delivery to Satan, 1 Tim. 1. 20. He who is cut off from the Communion of the Faithfull, is no longer under the Grace of the Holy Spirit. And he who is fall'n out of the Cover and Compass of this Grace, is deliver'd over to Satan. For where he finds any Persons Denuded and destitute of the Divine Grace, he seizes, and domineers over them. And therefore such cutting off, from Church-communion, is here called delivering over unto Satan, says † Zon. in † Zonaras, on S. Basil's saying, concerning those, who by Can 7. S. the old Penitentiary Canons were removed from Communion for thirty Years, that they were delivered over to Satan, for almost a Man's whole Age. Yea, probably, the attempts of these wicked Spirits, are more greedy, and violent upon those, whether Schismatics or Excommunicates, who for a while were rescued out of their hands; than upon others, who were held always under them. And

† Dr. Lightfoot's Hor.
Heb. in
Joh. 12.
31.

* Matth.
18. 17.

† In Loc.

† Zon. in
Can 7. S.
Basil. ad
Amphiloch

And accordingly, in the *Parable of the unclean Spirit* we are told, that if, being *once driven out of a man*, he find him *empty*, and naked of Guards, and so fit to be made a prey again; *he takes with him seven Spirits worse than himself*, when he seeks to enter into him the second time, *Matth. 12. 43, 44, 45. & 2 Pet. 2. 26.*

Quest. Would you note any thing else, that is like to provoke God to abandon, and give us up to these deluding Spirits?

Ans. Yes, to omit others, buying and selling of the Truth, or acting for Gain, against God, and a good Conscience. When Men forsake God, or a good way or thing, not out of sincere convictions but secular interests, and for worldly gain: then doth the *Devil* enter, and take possession of them. For his great way is to open the Door by a golden Key, and by the offers of gain to get admission. And thus he *enter'd into Judas*, taking possession of him by *thirty pieces of silver*, which he preferred before *his Master*, *Luk. 22. 3, 4, 5.* And into *Ananias*, getting him into his Power, and *filling his heart*, by a desire of *keeping the price of his land* to himself, *Act. 5. 3.* When Men once put themselves into Satan's hands, by *putting away a good conscience*, and professing, or acting against convictions; they are in the ready way, as *S. Paul* says, to *make shipwreck of the right Faith*, and fall under a delusion of their understandings, *2 Tim. 1. 19.*

Quest. But doth not God himself do more than suffer, and give way to sin, by leaving them to their own Lusts, or to Satan, as you say, to push them on, when he talks of *giving men a Spirit of slumber*, *Rom. 11. 8, 10,* & *Isaiah 6. 10.* Is not that something positive of his inflicting?

Ans. 'Tis like it is a sending a sluggishness of thought, or a dulness and drowiness of apprehension on them. Not such as makes them quite unable to apprehend; but only, like a drowsie Man, more listless, heavy and slow in it. 'Tis *eyes, wherewith they should not see; and ears, wherewith they should not hear*; that is, such wherewith they would not, because they could not do it easily, *Rom. 11. 8.* Such abatement of intellectual perspicacity, and power, God sometimes threatens to obdurate sinners, saying, *he will smite them with madness,*

or *blindness*, or *astonishment*, and stupidity of *heart*, Deut. 28. 28. And this is very just, thus to impair the perfection of our minds, as well as the health and strength of our Bodies, in punishment of our sins. For both these, being his gratuitous and undeserved gifts, are reversible in what measure he pleases. And he never withdraws them in his wrath from contumacious sinners, but on forfeitures and high provocations, when they have winked long against the Light, and would not see with quick and clear senses. It is all in way of Justice, and Judicial Process; so that there is nothing, but what shows a Holy, a Just, and Good God too in all this.

Quest. But if God so irreconcilably hates sin, why doth he not employ his Power to keep it out? Were it not easie for an Almighty God, to prevent sin in the World, if he would?

Ans. It is not fit he should make it impossible, by putting it out of our power to chuse it. And as for such ways, as infer no force upon our wills, but consist with our free and rewardable avoidance of sin, he has not been wanting in them, which is all that is to be expected on his part.

Quest. Why, to ease both himself, and us of the evil of sin, might not God make it impossible, and put it out of our power to chuse it?

Ans. Because that is inconsistent with our Natures, who, having Flesh as well as Spirit, must needs be free to Evil, as well as Good. It would leave nothing in us to be commended, or rewarded, when we do abstain from it; there being no thanks due to any Man, for omitting what he was utterly incapable to act. To make sin impossible, is to offer violence to our free and reasonable Natures, and to set aside all Laws, all Censure, and reward of Actions. Which no reason will expect a Holy God should do, who looks not only at his own Power and Holiness, but at the displaying of his Governing-Justice too, and the Freedom and Liberty of his Creatures, and will take such ways to keep out sin, as best comport with all these. So that an utter incapacity for it, is no way of hindring us free and rewardable Creatures, who are not to be irresistably forced and compelled, but drawn and persuaded.

Quest.

Quest. And has God done all, that can reasonably be expected that way, to prevent sin?

Ans. Yes, he has given his own Son to die a cruel Death, thereby to purchase Mercy for all that truly repent of their sins; he has plainly showed, and forbid all sin, that no Person need be ignorant of it; he has threatened it with the most insupportable punishments, that all may be afraid to come near it; he offers the most incomparable rewards to all that will overcome it; and promises the aid of an unconquerable Spirit and Grace, to enable all, who will strive as they ought, to prevail against it. In summ, having stupendiously brought about, by the meritorious Death of his own Son, that Mercy should be offered to all Men to pardon; and Grace to extirpate and abolish sin: he has left nothing wanting, but their own wills, to perfect the conquest of it. And he has done all that for them, and set all those things before them, which should, not force their wills, indeed, but bend and persuade them to resolve upon such conquest. And that is all, which ought to be done with free Creatures, whose wills are not to be forced, but won and persuaded, towards its exclusion. So that if after all, sin be in the World, God's Holiness, and, I may add, his Goodness too, are not to be charged, as if they had not abundantly done their part: but only the obstinacy of Mens own perverse wills, which are not to be forced, and will not be dissuaded from it, by all that can be fitly and reasonably offered to them. And therefore it may still be most justly said of God, as the Scripture doth, *What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* Isaiah 5. 4. *The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance,* 2 Pet. 3. 9. *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but had rather that the wicked man would turn from his way, and live,* Ezek. 33. 11.

Quest. Another of God's Attributes you mentioned, is his Goodness. Is God's Goodness an undistinguishing Indulgence, that lights promiscuously on all Persons?

Ans. No, 'tis a Wise and Holy Goodness, that respects qualifications. 'Tis the Goodness of a just God, not of a fond Man, and so is prone to all tenderness, that is consistent with Wise and Holy Ends, and Governing

verning Justice. But tenderness and indulgence to ill things, and for ill purposes and effects, is not goodness, but dotage.

Quest. So that God's Goodness doth not bespeak such tenderness, as relents, at the very sight of all miserable objects?

Ans. No, when Love and Kindness have been finally abused by them, affronted Goodness gives way to inflamed Justice, and can see Men smart and suffer, without being grieved for them.

Quest. Then we must not fancy God's Mercy is such an effeminate softness, and fond pity, as starts at the thoughts of any severity, though most wholesome and necessary?

Ans. No, it is Mercy to the Penitent, and Pitiabie; but can well bear to see tormenting Cures wrought, on diseased, and straying offenders; or Vengeance executed on obdurate Criminals.

Quest. Neither is his Goodness such easiness, as will be won or wearied out, purely by the confidence in requests, and meer importunity of obdurate sinners?

Ans. No, this good and easie God can be inflexible to any impious, or unreasonable request. And if they have been deaf to him in his time of calling, he will shew himself Just as well as Good, and requite them in their own kind, and be deaf to them in theirs, yea, when the extremity of their distress makes them cry to him with utmost importunity, and loudness. *When their fear comes, says he, as desolation to lay all waste, and destruction as a whirlwind to sweep all before it: then, though they call, and seek me early, will I; instead of relenting, laugh, and mock at their calamity, Prov. 1. 26, 27, &c.*

Quest. But when this Goodness puts such difference between Objects, is it, as some fancy, a blind and partial benevolence, that fixes by chance, or humour, on some; and when once it is fixed, heaps all favours, and sees no faults in them?

Ans. No, by no means. God's Goodness is not guided, as fond Man's often is, by blind fancy, but always by highest discretion. He is infinite in Goodness, but yet so, as at the same time, to be equal in Justice, and Wisdom too. So that he will do good to all, that

have

have not incapacitated themselves by their own fault, but to none against just, and wise reason.

Quest. By this it seems, this good God has not more love of any Persons, as they are his Creatures, or Favourites, than as they are endowed with certain qualifications. And that his hatred is stronger against sin, than his Love is for any Favourite, or created Being?

Ans. Yes, he never loves an evil work, out of favour to the workers; but, as the * *Scripture* often tells us, he hates the workers for the sake of their evil works. So that no Persons must ever fancy they are such Favourites of God that he will tolerate them in any wickedness. Or that, having once fixed his Love upon them, or made Decrees in their favour, he will not see sin in them, nor impute it to them, nor hate them for such things, as are most hateful to him in others.

Quest. If it is none of these things, what is it we are to understand by God's Goodness?

Ans. His perfect delight in doing good. Which I shall note especially in *two* things, *viz.* his forwardness in rewarding good Services, and his great Patience and easiness in passing over offences.

Quest. Is he mindful of his Servants, and careful to reward all their good Services?

Ans. Yes, and that he would have all Men undoubtedly to think by him, that so they may be encouraged to serve him. For *he that cometh to God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of those, that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6.

Quest. Is he also Patient and Merciful upon their Offences, as well as Bountiful upon their good Services?

Ans. Yes, when they repent, and turn from them. For he proclaims himself *long-suffering, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. He shows wonderful Patience, in bearing with the sins of Men; and Mercy in pardoning, when they truly repent of them.

Quest. And is not this Mercy some encouragement to those, who go on in their sins?

Ans. No, because, as I said, he will have Mercy on those only, who repent of them. His *long-suffering* with

*Psal. 5.5.
Prov. 21.
27. & chap.
28. 9.

with sinners, is only to give them time, and *lead them to repentance*, Rom. 2. 4. And his forgiving them, is only when they do repent. For even there, where he proclaims his Mercy, he declares *he will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. 34. 7. If we are impenitent to the last, there is no expectation of Mercy to forgive, but of Justice to punish us.

Quest. You say God shows this Goodness, in bountifully rewarding good Services. Doth he not also show the same, in estimating what Services are good, and fit to be rewarded by him?

Ans. Yes, as far as is consistent with truth, and reason. He is by no means captious, or exceptionous, like one that studied to find faults, and make the worst of our performances. Nor stiff, and rigid in standing upon the extremities of things, but is ready to make all fair abatements, and allowances, which are reasonably and justly pleadable in our case, as I shall have occasion to observe afterwards.

Quest. What mean you by God's Justice, or Righteousness?

Ans. His doing Right and Equity, both *first*, in giving Righteous Laws; and *secondly*, in passing Righteous Judgments according to them, without respect of Persons.

Quest. Is God Righteous as a Law-giver, in imposing only just and Righteous Laws?

Ans. Yes, the Gods of the *Gentiles*, indeed, which S. Paul * says were *Devils*, enjoined their Worshipers, the most sinful, foul, and cruel things. They served *Bacchus* in the Idol Feasts called the *Bacchannals*, and other of their Deities, with Revellings, and Drunkenness, and Profligate Uncleaness: and so S. Peter says, whilst they wrought the will of the *Gentiles*, together with their abominable Idolatries, they walked in lasciviousness, excess of wine, revellings, 1 Pet. 4. 3. as the *Israelites*, joying themselves to the Idol *Baal-Peor*, committed whoredoms, Num. 25. 1, 2, 3. They served *Moloch*, that is, *Saturn*, by most horrible and unnatural cruelties, dropping their own Children into the Fire through the Hands of his Statue, and so burning them alive to him; which the Scripture calls *making them pass through the fire to Moloch*, as a burnt-offering. Lev. 18.

21. & Jer. 19. 5. But the True God is most utterly opposite to all such impositions. He commands nothing, but what is pure, and virtuous, and for our own good and advantage; what is honourable, and perfective of our Natures; nay, what is worthy, not only of Men, but of Angels, and, when he would submit to any Laws, as he did when in *Christ* he became Man, of God himself.

Quest. This shews the excellency of his Laws. But what say you to the equity of them? Are they not rigorous and over-burdenfome, requiring more than we are able to perform?

Ans. No, though he requires great things, yet together with that, he offers such help and grace, as will render them, not only possible, but tolerably easie to us. *His commandments are not grievous, 1 John 5. 3. His yoke is easie, and his burden light, Matth. 11. 30.*

Quest. Is God Righteous also as a Judge; that is, when he comes to Judgment, will he impartially execute his Laws, without favour, or respect of Persons?

Ans. Yes, For in his Righteous Judgment, he will render to every Man, according to his deeds. To those, who by continuance in well-doing, sought Glory, eternal Life. But to all, that obey unrighteousness, and are impenitent sinners, wrath and anguish, and that on every one, that doth evil, without respect of persons, Rom. 2. 5. to 12.

Quest. What will become then of all those that break his Laws?

Ans. Unless they make their peace by true Repentance, they must be condemned to that eternal Death, which his Law threatens.

Quest. But doth not God sometimes punish one Man for another's sin, as the Children for the Parents, or the Parents for the Children; whereas the rule of Justice is to give every Man his own?

Ans. No, in all his allotments, he assures us *the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him, Behold, saith he, all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son: and one shall not suffer for another, but the soul that sinneth it shall die, Ezek. 18. 4, 19, 20.* Indeed, if

† 1 Sam.

2. 23, 24,

29. & chap.

3. 13.

a Father shares in a Child's fault, by setting an evil example to it, or by being too indulgent and not seasonably correcting it; then he shall suffer, as * *Eli* did: but this is not for his Child's, but for his own sin, in as much as he concurred thereto. And if a Child follow his Father's sin, he shall partake in his punishment, as is implied in *Ezekiel*, chap. 18. 14. but that is not because his Father sinned, but because he imitated him in his sin. But if we do not communicate in the sins of other Men, we shall not answer for their guilt; for *every man shall bear his own burden*, Gal. 6. 5.

Quest. But what say you, when God punishes a wicked Parent with want, or an infirm body; doth not that transmit Diseases, or Poverty to his innocent Posterity? Or, when he scourges a sinful Nation, with the Sword, Famine, or Pestilence; do not those involve the Innocent, in common with the Criminals?

Ans. Yes, but these not being directed by Almighty God upon themselves, but seizing them through the necessity of second causes, and course of things, by reason of their joynt Interests and Relations; they are not vindictive strokes, nor in the way of punishments, but only their calamities and misfortunes. 'Tis their own mixt Interests, not God's Justice, which brings these upon their heads.

Quest. But when Men have forfeited by their own sins, is not God, who would otherwise spare, oft-times moved to exact the forfeiture for the sins of others, who will be afflicted, and are intended to be punished in their misfortunes.

Ans. Yes, and that, 'tis like, may be a reason, why, when God says in the *Second Commandment*, that he will punish the sins of Idolatrous Fathers, who are particularly called *haters of him, on the Children*, he limits it to the *third, and fourth generation*. For 'tis very possible the Parents may live so long to see their Sufferings, and so be punished themselves, in beholding what their unfortunate Posterities endure for their sakes. But since in this case, God only takes just forfeitures, and withholds undue favours, and forbearance, when he has great and wise reasons; it is no reflexion at all on his Justice, or other Attributes.

Quest.

Quest. I see God doth not misplace punishments, by punishing one for another's offences. But may he not seem to misproportion them, when he punishes momentary sins with eternal torments? Is that consistent with Rules of Justice?

Ans. Yes, whatever punishments are justly proposed, may be justly exacted. For what a just, and wise Law-giver denounces, a just Judge may execute. And if Men feel the smart of it, they can only blame themselves. For why would they deserve it? The punishment was denounced to the sin, before they had made themselves guilty of the same. And this denunciation was intended to restrain them from committing it. And if they would, by God's help they might have been restrained thereby. So that be their suffering hard, or their punishment what it will, they have none to accuse but themselves, for having voluntarily called it down upon their own heads.

Quest. But is it just, to propose and denounce such heavy punishments?

Ans. Yes, because there is need of them, and Mankind will not be restrained by less. For so strong is the sinful byass and inclination of our Natures, so many and great are our temptations, and so much is the advantage of sensible and present pleasures above future and unseen recompences; that Men would never forego the pleasures of their sins on smaller Considerations. Not only the offers of all temptations, but also the reluctancies of our own Natures are to be out-weighed, and the great disadvantage of remote and unseen things is to be compensated, by the immensity, and eternal duration of these punishments. So that less than these, would not discourage any numbers in our Circumstances. Nay, alas, how few do these binder and discourage, as the general wickedness of those, who profess to believe them, is a lamentable and abundant evidence.

Quest. But between sin and punishment, as 'tis usually said, there should be some proportion. Whereas sins, that are soon at an end, and sufferings, that have no end, bear no proportion.

Ans. Since sins and sufferings are no material bodily substances, they are not capable of being proportioned

to each other by weight, or measure, to be weighed out equally in Scales, or measured by a Rule and Line, as Bodies are. Their proportion, is not a natural proportion, on account of any exact intrinsic weight and size; but a moral proportion, in respect of ends and uses, which is to work on Mens wills, and in their free choice to surmount all impediments, and out-weigh all temptations to disobedience. So that to proportion punishments to sins, is not exactly to equalize them in intrinsic weights and measures, there being nothing in their Natures, which can ground such comparisons: But tho' not only, yet at least chiefly, to proportion punishments to temptations, so as to make them out-weigh them in our choice and free-wills; which is a way of proportioning punishments, that admits of more latitude, and needs not such exactness as the other doth. And thus eternal punishments are proportionate to our offences; that is, they are no more, than are necessary to make us forego those pleasures, or advantages, which recommend them. Nay, alas! with the greater part of Men, they cannot do this, who are so bewitched with sins present pleasures, that they will enjoy them, though for that they fall at last under these eternal torments, as we see by sad experience.

Quest. This shews, that we are not to seek for any intrinsic fixt proportions, between Sins and Punishments. But is there not some difference in the appendant guiltiness, and intrinsic evil and weight of Sins themselves; and accordingly some sort of Proportion and Comparison between them?

Ans. Yes, some there is; but the Degrees thereof are neither to be fixed and determin'd, nor need to be considered, with exactness. One Sin, indeed, is greater, and another less, according to the venerableness and estimation of their objects, or the mischievousness of their effects, or other things which are impediments in the way of Mens committing them, and which, unless they are violently wicked, might have restrain'd them from the same. And as for these things, which thus naturally heighten Sins, and make one greater and another less in comparison with others; some regard, tho' no exact regard, is had thereto in proportioning and dealing out Punishments to them, so that one *† shall have more* and another

† Luke 12.
47, 48.

another fewer stripes, and the state of some shall thereby be more † intolerable than the state of others. And this † *Mat. 11*
 Regard is more especially had to the same, in compari- 22. 24.
 son between several Sins and their several Punishments ;
 to shew the impartiality of any Punishment, which is al-
 lotted to one, in respect of that which is allotted unto o-
 thers. But the principal and chief thing, which rules
 and fixes the Proportion betwixt Sins and Punishments,
 either compared with other Sins, or especially when
 considered absolutely, and to justify how High they may
 and ought to be punish'd in themselves, is the satisfacti-
 on of their ends and uses ; and Penalties, as I said, are
 still to be so far hightened in degrees, as Mens Free-
 wills, and Temptations, do require and stand in need
 of

Quest. Since God is thus exactly just, and equal in
 all his ways, it is great Blasphemy in any to represent
 him as tyrannical, or imperious, that doth good, or
 hurt, out of meer will or humour, not in regard to the
 qualifications of his Creatures ?

Ans. So it is. Thus, indeed, the *Indians* thought of
 the *Devils* whom they worshipped. And thus all super-
 stitious Persons think of God, who seek to appease him
 by vile flatteries, slavish tremblings, and forced submis-
 sions, which are suited to such imperious and humour-
 some tempers. But the true God is most just, and rea-
 sonable in all his ways, requiring to be served only in
 the wisest things, and from willing hearts, and recom-
 pencing by a most unbiassed and exact sentence. All
 is highest reason and unblemished Justice, nothing
 weak humour or passion, which this Almighty Prince
 doth.

Quest. God's punitive Justice then is nothing like im-
 potent Men's implacable revenge, who cannot be at ease
 till their anger is satiated with the smart of their Ene-
 mies ?

Ans. No, in no wise. He doth not punish to gratifie
 private passions, and resentments. When he afflicts, it
 is not willingly, *Lam. 3. 33. How shall I give thee up ?*
 is his compassionate relenting, when a sinner is almost
 past Mercy, *Hos. 11. 8.* But it is for wise, and pub-
 lick ends, to keep up Government, to secure Goodness,
 and discourage Offences. God's Justice is a wise Reso-
 lution;

lution, not a weak Passion : and he takes pleasure in the pains inflicted by it, as they are well and wisely done ; not at all, as angry Men are wont to do, because thereby they have wrecked their spite on those that vexed them.

Quest. Besides this Justice, in allotting future recompences ; doth not God also show himself just, in bestowing present, and suitable events to actions ?

* 1 Sam.
2 3.

Ans. Yes, by him, as * *Hannah* acknowledged, *actions are weighed*, before they are accomplished, to bestow events ; as well as after, to make retributions, according to Reason and Justice. And this present Judicature, God discharges in the Administration of his Providence. Which must make all Men extreme wary what designs, or attempts they ingage in, never despairing of his Blessing in a good way, nor presuming on it in an ill one, as I shall note afterwards.

Quest. Is God present in all places, to take notice of all the actions, both of good and bad Men, which he will thus justly reward or punish ?

Ans. Yes, for *whither shall I flee from thy presence ? Psal. 139. 7. The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil, and the good, Prov. 15. 3. He fills heaven and earth, so that no man may hide himself in secret places, that he shall not see him, Jer. 23. 24.* And the sense of this, as it will induce us every where to pray to him, because, though unseen, he is every where present to hear our Prayers ; so would it be every where an effectual restraint, and hinder us from venturing on any evil, or misbecoming thing. For what Man would presume to do a rude thing, in his Sovereign's presence ; or an impertinent and trifling one, before any wise, and grave Persons ; or a base and filthy one, before even a Child, or Stranger, and much more before those, whose care 'tis to rebuke, and punish such misdoings ? So that in all Places and Companies, we should demean our selves with decency and modesty, with seriousness and gravity, with circumspection and care, purity and integrity, if we bethought our selves that the Great and Holy God stands looking on, and observes all our motions.

Quest. And will it not also quicken Mens diligence in good things, and make them active in his Service ?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, it would do so even with eye servants, who put on a great shew of care, and diligence in their Master's presence. And besides, it would incite Men to a great frequency in Ejaculations, and solemn Addresses to Almighty God : it being most unseemly to stand mute and regardless before him, without suitable expressions of Adoration and Reverence.

Quest. And doth this Omnipresent God see even our hearts, and secret thoughts ?

Ans. Yes, *he is acquainted with all our ways, he understands our thoughts afar off, and there is not a word in our tongue but he knows it altogether,* Psal. 139. 2, 3, 4.

Quest. By this it seems, that God knows all that is done by us in this World, and will be incorruptibly just in rewarding all that is good, and in punishing all that is bad, except repentance prevents it ?

Ans. Yes.

Quest. What mean you by God's Faithfulness, another of his Attributes ?

Ans. I mean *two* things. *First*, his inviolable performance of his promises. *Secondly*, his constant adherence to his Friends, and faithful Servants.

Quest. God has made most Gracious Promises to his Servants, both for this Life, and the next. Will he be inviolably Faithful, and keep his Word ?

Ans. Yes, for he is not as Man that can be overseen, and afterwards see his folly, and repent of it. *He is not as man, that he should repent : hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good ?* Num. 23. 19.

Quest. But when he Promises, or makes Gracious Invitations, or Declarations to sinners, as he * often doth, doth he deal plainly, and mean as he says ?

Ans. God forbid we should think otherwise. For he is essential, unmixed Truth, as incapable of all insincere arts and double dealings, as he is of down-right falsehoods. He never saves his Sincerity or Faithfulness, by secret reserves, or evasive interpretations, being absolutely above all need of, or temptation to such unworthy Artifices. So that whatsoever we have reason to believe, or expect from his Word, is plain Truth, and shall be most honestly and punctually made good Especially, if, as in † these cases, we have, not only his Word, but also his

* 1 Tim.

2. 4.

2 Pet. 3. 9.

Ezek. 33.

11.

† Ezek. 33.

11.

Oath, which the *Apostle* calls *two immutable things, where-in 'tis impossible for God to lye*, that is, to delude our expectations, *Heb. 6. 18.* And therefore when God calls, and invites Men, to accept of his Mercy, and return to him; let not any Person harbour the least thought, as if he were not in earnest, or that his secret Will doth contradict his Word, or that when he calls for their return he doth not desire it, or has let some impregnable Decrees as a bar against them, or will subtract that aid which is necessary to them, and without which it is impossible for them ever to return to him. These, and such like, are ungodly and prophane suspicions, which stain and blemish the spotless, and absolute sincerity of the most true God, with the faults and falshoods of wicked and deceitful Men. And where is Mens Reason, or Reverence, when they question whether God means as he says; who yet are ready to resent it as a great affront, if, on their most serious assertions, any Person shall make the same doubt and question of themselves?

Quest. And is he as able to make good his Word, as he is sincere in passing it?

Ans. Yes, he is the *Almighty God*, that doth whatsoever he pleases, both in heaven, and earth, the sea, and in all deep places, *Psal. 135. 6.* But as for the Explication, and Remarks upon this Attribute, I shall reserve them, till it comes to be considered in its own place in the *Creed*.

Quest. But when God promises, he oft-times defers long ere he accomplishes.

Ans. Though he delays, yet he never forgets, or alters. Neither multitude of affairs, nor length of time, nor after-thoughts, can either wear it out of his Memory, or change his Purpose. *He will ever be mindful of his covenant, Psal. 111. 5.* He is the faithful God, who keepeth covenant to a thousand generations, *Deut. 7. 9.* who keepeth truth for ever, *Psal. 146. 6.* And being sure of God's Promises at last, we may well have patience in waiting for them: as *Abraham* had, who received not the *Child of promise*, till he was very old; and as his seed after him had likewise, who entred not into the *promised land*, till above * 400 Years after God had made him the promise of it.

* Gen. 15.

13.

Exod. 12. *Quest.* But, if in hopes of his promised rewards, and

41.

dread of his just punishments, we should take the pains to be *Holy as he is Holy*, to make him our Friend; is he never

never inconstant to his Friends, and are we in no danger of losing him ?

Ans. No.

Quest. One thing we may be sure of, that he will live as long as we shall do, to stand in need of him.

Ans. Yes for he is Eternal, *from everlasting to everlasting, he is God*, Psal. 90. 2. and *when the heavens, and the earth shall be changed, he is the same, and his years shall have no end*, Psal. 102. 25, 26, 27.

Quest. And when once he loves, and takes complacence in us, will he be constant, and not alter his affection ?

Ans. Yes, if we continue to love, and serve him: For *he is the same yesterday, and to day, and for evermore*, Heb. 13. 8. *with him is no variableness, nor so much as shadow of turning*, Jam. 1. 17.

Quest. But what, if, after we are the Friends of God, we should return to live in sin ?

Ans. Then we should lose his Love. For the constancy of his affection, lies not in loving and hating always the same Men, but in loving and hating always for the same reason. 'Tis an immoveable fixedness, not upon the same Persons, but upon the same carriage and qualities. For *if the wicked, whom God hates, turn from his wickedness ; he shall surely live, and not die. And if the righteous, whom God loves, turn from his righteousness, and doth according to the ways of the wicked, all his former righteousness shall be forgotten, and in his sins, that he hath since committed, shall he die*, Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 24.

Quest. Another Attribute above-mentioned, is the *Wisdom of God*. What mean you by God's *Wisdom*.

Ans. His most absolute Understanding, which clearly sees through all things, and knows what means are most proper, and what seasons best to move in, to bring about every purpose.

Quest. Is it one part of God's Wisdom, to set the justest rate and estimate on all things, not only clearly apprehending the truth, but proportionably valuing the worth of them, never magnifying a little, or undervaluing a great and weighry matter ?

Ans. Yes, to be fond of worthless things, is no property of the Wise, but of Children and simple Persons ; for such only are apt to be taken with Toys, and Trifles. Little things may greatly delight, or disturb little Spirits : but the Great and All-wise God, is most Wise and Great in all his resentments, never setting more by any things, than is really in them, or valuing them without, or beyond just cause. As all ill things he hates, so all empty ones he slights : proportioning all his resentments to the true weight and worth of Objects, that they may be always wise, and worthy of himself. And therefore no Men must ever fanſie to gain God, or fear to lose him, by such little things, and trivial indifferencies, as have little or nothing in them, but are below the resentment of any intelligent and prudent Man.

Quest. Indeed, a small indifferent matter, is not fit to bear a great resentment, either on one side, or other. So that frequent Crossings, or Sprinkling our selves with Holy Water, or Visiting certain Shrines, or putting on some Religious Habits, or other empty and uncommanded Ceremonies, are no more fit to gain the good presence, and protection of God ; than the sight of a Surplice, a Posture, a Place, or other unforbidden Ceremony, are to forfeit and drive them away from us.

Ans. Very right ; but what doth either the one, or the other, must always be the things of weight and moment. In particular, his own Laws, which are all about the most important matters, contain the things which he likes. So that we gain, and please him, by obedience ; and offend, and lose him, by disobeying. And therefore no Men must build on uncommanded abstinencies or severities, or on any affected singularities ; nor, in general, must we ever seek the favour, or shun the displeasure of Almighty God, by arbitrary fancies and inventions of our own, but always according to what is written.

Quest. If this All-wise God sees through all things, he perfectly understands our Natures ?

Ans. Yes, he made our hearts, and all our faculties, and so thorowly understands them, seeing clearly into all their turnings and windings, tempers and inclinations, what things will incite and draw them on, and what

what again will effectually restrain, and divert them from any purpose.

Quest. If he can tell how far every thing will work upon us, he can foresee the issue and effect of all means and methods; and, in particular, what force Preaching, Persuasion, Reproof, Discipline, Promises, Threatnings, or other means of Grace, will have upon Mankind at large, and what upon all particular Men, of every genius, interest, and temptation?

Ans. Yes, he knew assuredly that *Pharaoh would not let the Israelites go*, no not for all his plagues, *Exod. 3. 19.* And that *the elders of Israel, would hearken to the voice of Moses*, *verse 18.* And that *Tyre, and Sydon, would have repented at the sight of Christ's great, and wonderful works*, *Matth. 11. 21.* And this must beget in us the greatest Opinion, and Reverence for all God's Ordinances. So that no Persons must ever ask, as some prophanelly do, what good it doth to go so oft to Prayers; or say they can benefit as much by reading at home, when they are called upon to go to Church, and hear a Sermon; or slightly neglect, or undervalue any other means of God's appointing. Since God has prescribed Prayers, and Sacraments, and Preaching, and the Authority of Spiritual Guides, and the Unity of the Church, &c. as perpetual, and powerful means of Faith and good Life; who shall dare to accuse any of them of weakness, or unsuitness; and pretend better to understand their efficacy, than he that understands all things; or put down his, and set up their own Wisdom, by neglecting the old, and beating out new ways for themselves?

Quest. Doth God also see the best times, and the fittest seasons for every purpose?

Ans. Yes, so exactly, as never in the least degree either to precipitate any business, or stay so long, till the fittest minute for it has over-passed him. And this must teach us never to think any Mercies too long delayed, or any Afflictions from his hand too fast hastned. Though in case of good desired, the present generally seems best to Flesh and Blood; yet in truth God's own time is always fittest. So that whether any thing sent by him, come too soon, or too slow, in respect of our wishes, they come just when they should, neither too early, nor too late, in respect of exactness of season, and usefulness.

Quest. If the Character of the great God, be to be so Holy, and Just, and True, and Faithful, and Good, and Patient, &c. as you have shewed, then no Man, who considers what he says, can reasonably pretend to love God, if he loves not these excellencies?

Ans. Very right. He can only have a blind love, as one that is fond of he knows not what: Or a mistaken love, as one that fancies God to be what he is not. But he has no intelligent, rational love of God, unless he loves those excellencies, that make up the Godhead. And if Men would worthily love these in God, they must seek to attain, and transcribe them out in themselves too.

Quest. At this rate no ungodly evil Man, who is an enemy of these Divine Tempers, can love God.

Ans. No; they may love some things in God, when taken asunder: as his Wisdom, which will move their admiration; or his Power, whilst he employs it for them; or his Goodness, so long as they feel its bountiful effects. But, if they seriously consider, they cannot love the Godhead, where all these properties are put together. For therein is an Holiness, that is irreconcilable to their sins; and a Justice, that will be inexorable in punishing them; a Faithfulness, that will execute Threatnings, as well as fulfil Promises; and an Almighty Power, to be employed in Eternally tormenting those that offend, as well as in Eternally rewarding all that truly serve him. And a God of this Character, is all terror unto them. If they considerately view him, they may soon see enough to make against them which will keep them from being truly in love with, or desirous of him. No Man can freely, and intelligently be in love with God, but he that is, or desires to be like him: and accordingly in Scripture, the love of God doth ordinarily include obedience to him.

Quest. If these excellencies make up God's Character, then when any Persons by his Grace have once attained them, they are like God, and partakers of the Divine Nature.

Ans. Yes, his Image consists in righteousness, and true holiness, Eph. 4. 24. So that whosoever are endowed with these, are truly good, and Godlike Persons.

Of God's Providence.

CHAP. II.

Of God's Providence.

The Contents:

God preserves all things he hath made. And governs them. He observes all our actions. And all our temptations. He disposes of all good events. For he gives the fruits of the Earth. And Children. And success in business. How this should influence us in any enterprize, shown in sundry particulars. He gives promotion. And the favour of Men. And life and health to enjoy all other Blessings. And all Spiritual Mercies. He disposes also of ill events. As death of Friends. Unfortunate accidents, that afflict us in our Bodies, or Goods. Crosses, and obstructions, in our designs and business. Sufferings from ill Men. How God stints, and governs these. No excuse of their unjust violence, to say they are God's Instruments, and follow Providence. He sends also miscarriages of State, and Government: and presides in the most tumultuary, and distressed times. In these, still have Faith in Providence. But God must not be called the Author, or sender of those evils, which we bring down upon our selves, by our own faults, or follies.

Question. YOU have already showed what we are to believe of the Being, and Attributes of God. But another thing to be known of him, you said, is his Providence. What mean you by that?

Ans. His Preserving, and Governing us, and all things which he hath made.

Quest. Doth God preserve all that he hath made?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, both in their Beings, and in their Powers and Perfections. *He preserveth man, and beast,* Psalm 36. 6. *He gives to all their life, and breath, and all things: for in him we live, move, and have our being,* Acts 17. 25, 28. In particular, he preserves Men in their Persons, and Faculties. So that no Man loses, either his Memory, or Understanding, or the use of any of his Senses, or any other bodily Powers and Perfections, but only when, and so far as God orders, or permits. And this must teach all Persons, under any apprehension of diminution, or loss of their Senses, or Intellectuals, or other Powers and Perfections, not to distract and afflict their hearts, by fearing and fancying the worst. For God that gave these Powers, is still the continuer and preserver of them, and 'tis very hard if he may not be trusted with them. Let us commit them cheerfully to him, and he will either continue the use of them, or supply the defect, and repair the detriment, that shall come by their loss or diminution.

Quest. Must it not teach us the same, in all prospects of dangerous, or tormenting distempers too?

Ans. Yes, for he is the preserver of our health, and strength, as well as of other faculties. And therefore when any Persons are entering under any bodily Pains, or Diseases, let them endeavour to bear the present burden with patience. But not make it heavier, by painful anticipations of futurities; fancying what they shall do, if their Distemper grows up to the greatest extremities; or, if some other cross Distemper, should at the same time incapacitate, and deprive them of those helps, which yield them the greatest ease and support under this; or, if their Pain and Sicknes be prolonged to such a distance, as will outlast both their strength, and patience. For if God is their preserver, is not the timing, and stinting of all these in his hands? And will not he order all, in compassionate proportion to our strength and necessities, and the supplies of his own Grace? Besides, 'tis great folly, as well as distrust, to anticipate distant maladies, by precipitate fears, and tormenting fancies. When all the while, God's Providence may prove as kind, as our melancholy imagination is cruel, and preserve all that by a tender care, which we throw away in an over-hasty fear, by fancying

lying to our selves very dreadful futurities, wherewith he never intends to try us.

Quest. Doth God also govern all, that he hath made?

Ans. Yes.

Quest. Wherein is that shown?

Ans. In two things. *First*, In observing all actions. *Secondly*, In ordering, and disposing all events.

Quest. Doth God observe all our actions?

Ans. Yes, for *the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding both the evil, and the good*, Prov. 15. 3. And this should engage us in every thing to keep Innocency, and a clear Conscience, since he stands always looking on, to see how we acquit our selves.

Quest. The belief of this present Providence, in observing all actions, is necessary to all expectation of future recompences.

Ans. Very right. For if here God takes no cognizance, he can afterwards make no retributions, not knowing what Men have done, for him to reward, or punish. And therefore, as to Religion, it is all one to deny the Being of a God, as to deny his Providence; and *Epicureans*, in this respect, are as bad as *Atheists*.

Quest. As God is most watchful in observing all our actions, is he not equally so, in marking all our trials and temptations?

Ans. Yes, he not only sees, but sends, and sets bounds to them, and proportions answerable succours, to prevent their prevailing over us. *God is faithful, who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will, with the temptation, make a way to escape what is over-hard, that we may be able to bear the rest of it*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. And therefore whensoever we fall under any great trials, or fear them, we must neither trust to our own strength without God, nor despair of conquering them by his help. But seeking to him with earnest Prayers, and watching against the temptation with much heedfulness, have Faith in his Spirit and Providence, assuredly believing that he will either put by and break its strength, or increase ours.

Quest. And doth God order, and dispose of all events?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, even those that befall the meanest Creatures. For *not a Sparrow falls to the ground, without our heavenly Father*, *Matth. 10. 29.* But especially those, which befall Men, for whom his care extends to things so minute, that *even the hairs of their head are all numbred*, *verse 30.* He sends all the good, and evil, that happens to us in this World; so that we meet him at all turns, and must discern his Hand in all that happens.

Quest. Doth God order for us all the good events we meet with?

Ans. Yes, both all those, which come upon us by accident; for though they are accidents, and unexpected things to us, they are Providences and designed favours in God; and likewise all which come by our own care and pains, since when we labour and contrive for any thing, 'tis his Blessing that gives success to us.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Ans. Both to be thankful to him for every good thing, whilst we have them; and to live upon Providence, when we want them; considering, that God has the Gift and Donation of all those things, which we need, and that he has taken the care of us, and will bestow them when they are fit for us. This dependence upon God, or living upon Providence, is the constant Character of Religious Men in the *Scriptures*. *Abraham*, and *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, and all other Holy Men in all times, always attributed all those good things which they enjoyed to God, and trusted in him for the supply of all those which they wanted. And this Life, of Faith, or confidence in him, is the great mark of their Religion. *The just shall live or be sustained by Faith*, that is, in God's care, and kindness, and especial promises, *Habak. 2. 4.*

Quest. Is it God, who gives us all the Fruits of the Earth, and plentiful Seasons?

Ans. Yes, *he visiteth the earth, and watereth it. He maketh it soft with showres, and bleisseth the springing thereof. He crowns the year with his goodness, and his paths drop fatness*, *Psalm 65. 9, 10, 11.* *He causeth the grass to grow for the cattel, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and*

wine

wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oyl to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen mans heart, Psalm 104. 14, 15.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Ans. Before the Fruits of the Earth are grown up, it must make us Till the Ground, and Plow in hope that God will give a Blessing to it. Nay, in a hard Seed time, or discouraging Season, or under any seemingly approaching scarcity, it must quiet the Husbandman's heart, and the hearts of all others, with trust in God's Providence, who can open his Hand, and push on what he had kept back when he pleases, and proportion his supplies to our necessities. *The eyes of all, saith the Psalmist, must wait upon God, for he gives them their meat, and that in due season. He opens his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing,* Psalm 145. 15, 16.

Quest. And what must it teach us, after we have reaped them?

Ans. With cheerful, and thankful hearts, to give, not only the Priest his just due, but likewise the Poor, who is another of God's receivers, his portion. Which is most necessary, not only to express our thanks to God, who hath sent us all these Fruits, but also to increase our own store, and bring down God's Blessing upon our Fields, which will multiply the Seed sown, and bring in more. This, Solomon says, will be the effect of giving to the Poor. *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth: the liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth, shall be watered also himself,* Prov. 11. 24, 25. And the same increase we may hope to reap, from paying the Priest all his just dues also. *Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine: that is, God will give thee for this, both a plentiful Harvest, and a rich Vintage,* Prov. 3. 9, 10.

Quest. Indeed, if God's Blessing maketh Rich, 'tis obvious to infer, that being just to the Priest, and charitable to the Poor, who are both under God's especial care, is like to gain him, and so is the truest way of thriving?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, he that thinks Providence gives the increase, will readily believe it; and he who tries, if he is not wanting to it on other accounts, will experimentally find, that this is not the way to diminish, but to increase an estate. This, *Azariah* the chief Priest told King *Hezekiah*, was the cause of that surplussage of plenty, which God bestowed upon the Jews, 2 Chron. 31. The King had commanded all the people, to pay justly all their Tythes and Offerings, which had been fraudulently withheld, to the Priests and Levites, for their encouragement in the Law of the Lord: beginning the Practice with his own example, paying all his dues to the Church, verse 3, 4. And as soon as this commandment came abroad, the people brought in all their Tythes and Oblations, as they fell due in abundance, the first-fruits of corn, of wine, and oil, and hony, and all the increase of the field, the tythe of oxen, and sheep, and the tythe of holy things which were consecrated unto the Lord their God, the tythe of all things brought they in abundantly, and laid them heaps by heaps, verse 5, 6. And when *Hezekiah*, and the Princes, came and saw the heaps, and thereby understood the vast increase which the People had received, which yielded such abundance of Dues to the Priests, he blessed God for it, and asked *Azariah* concerning the cause of this mighty surplussage, verse 8, 9. And *Azariah* the chief Priest answered him, and said, Since the people began to bring the offerings into the house of the Lord, we have had enough to eat, and have left plenty: for the Lord hath blessed his people, and that which is left, is this great store. That is, since out of their Fruits, which are the Gift of God, they have faithfully paid their Dues to God, he has so increased their store, that our share comes to so much we know not how to dispose of it, but have left all these heaps thou seest, after we, and our Families, have eaten, and are satisfied, verse 10.

Quest. I see it teaches us, both in Dury, and prudence, to give willingly, and cheerfully, the Poores Dole, and the Priests Dues: but doth it not also teach us how to enjoy, and spend the rest, which remains to our selves?

Ans. Yes, for coming from the free Bounty of God, we must enjoy it with a thankful and cheerful heart, not with murmuring, envy, or discontent, like Men that are pro-

proner to spy faults than to own favours, and are never pleased. Besides, since it is God's gift, we must take care that God be honoured by it, and never dishonour him, or abuse our selves, by spending it upon vice, or vanity, but own his Gift in a temperate, and sober use thereof. Yea, I add, in a charitable use too. For these Fruits God gives to us, not as Proprietors, but as ** Stewards*, to distribute abroad to the necessities of others, ** 1 Pet. 4. 10.* after we have served our selves. So that not only temperance and thankful hearts, but Alms and Charity also, are necessary to hallow our enjoyments, *Give alms of such things, as you have, and behold all things are clean unto you, Luke 11. 41.*

Quest. Is it God also that gives us Children?

Ans. Yes, Children, or the Fruit of the Womb, are a reward, an heritage, that cometh of the Lord: that is, he disposes of them to whom he pleases, as a Parent doth of his Estate, *Psalms 127. 3.* And therefore, as we must rest satisfied whilst we have none, because it is God that withholds them: so must we trust in God when we have many of them, believing, that, since, as our Saviour saith, ** the life is more than meat*, he that sent ** Matth. 6. 25.* Mouths will send Meat; and that, as they were at first his Gift, they will be still his Care; and that he, who provides for the Ravens, will much more provide for them, *Luke 12. 24.*

Quest. Is it the same Providence of God, that makes us thrive in our Trades, and gives a prosperous success to us in any business?

Ans. Yes, *the horse is provided against the day of Battel, but safety is of the Lord, Prov. 21. 31.* Though a man's heart deviseth his way, that is, Men hammer out a project, yet the Lord directeth his steps, that is, God determines the event, and orders such an issue, as, perhaps, he never intended, *Prov. 16. 9.* Men may contrive, and pursue methods; but God still must govern and give events. *The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walks to direct his own steps, that is, to fix and determine them on any final issues, Jer. 10. 23.*

Quest. Must not this teach us, whensoever we begin any business, or set upon any attempts, to recommend them first to Almighty God, by Prayers or pious Ejaculations?

culations, and to place our chiefest confidence in his Blessing?

Ans. Yes, *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*, Prov. 3. 6. *commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established*, that is, shall take effect, Prov. 16. 3. And I think there is little question to be made, but that Men miscarry far oftner, than otherwise they would, in their designs and business, because they trust too much to their own care, and skill, and human aids, and seek no more to Almighty God, to ingage the furtherance of his good Providence.

Quest. Must Men seek thus to God, even in things wherein they are best skilled themselves, and when they are confident they take the surest methods?

Ans. Yes, for the surest means without a good Providence, will not secure the issues. *The race, as Solomon observed, is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor favour to men of skill*, Eccles. 9. 11. So that when Men are in the wisest courses, or most probable preparations, they have need still to look up to God, who must consummate all by his gracious assistance. *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*, Prov. 3. 5, 6. There is very much indeed, lies in wise management, every purpose, as Solomon says, being *established by counsel*, Prov. 20. 18. But when wise managers shew a Religious dependance, and trust in God too, that is the way to assure the event. *He that handles a matter wisely, shall find good*; but if, together with that, *he trust in the Lord more than in his own skill, happy is he*, Prov. 16. 20.

Quest. But if the event depends thus on God, till we see what way he will take, we cannot be sure of it. And must not this reach us not to be too positive, but modest in these expectations, and to promise the desired issue to our selves, still with this reserve, if God sees it fit for us?

Ans. Yes, *for man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way?* that is, foresee the event of it, since God oftentimes over-rules their motions, to ends far distant from their thoughts, Prov. 20. 24. And this, as it will keep us from being too confident

dent of gaining any good things, will preserve us also from desponding under the apparent danger of any bad ones : since, when they are nearest to us, God can turn them off by a thousand ways, nay, make them serve as means to accomplish our advantage.

Quest. Since he is to give the end of all actions, may we not safely trust him with that, and do what we ought to do, though thereby we foresee danger of displeasing others, or of prejudicing our worldly interests ?

Ans. Yes, we must be careful to do our duty, that is our part ; and trust him with events, for that is his. God oft surprizes us with issues ; so that a Man cannot foresee the end of his own way, which frequently will be better than he expects it. And this in the most perillous and threatning times, should teach all Men to be more thoughtful, and concerned for the exact doing of their duty, than for escaping the cross, which may seem to accompany it. For if then they can be so happy, as to consider wisely, and perform what they ought, they may leave Providence to give it a good effect, and take care they be no losers by it.

Quest. And since we can bring no business about, but by God's Blessing, must not this teach us never to seek to gain our end by any sin ?

Ans. Most certainly, for that is the way to offend God, and move him, not to bless, but to blast our design. If we hope to succeed, as I have observed from Solomon, *we must commit our work to him*, and that can be only in well-doing : *we must acknowledge him*, and then not seek help from any sin, since that were to renounce him. *Let thine eyes look straight on*, so as to aim only at just ends, *and ponder the way of thy feet*, so as to take none but lawful methods, *and then thy paths shall be established*, Prov. 4. 25, 26.

Quest. And the same you will say of driving Trade, by false Weights and Measures, or by belying Wares, or setting exacting Prices, or otherwise using indirect Arts, or deceitful Speeches and Pretences ?

Ans. Yes, for all these in God's Eyes are an abomination, and so can never bring down, but may well stop a Blessing. Which every Man ought seriously

ously to consider, who believes a good Trade to be of God's sending.

Quest. If we are to have all the good effect of our pains, and projects, from God, we must have it at his time. And ought we not to think his the best Season?

Ans. Yes, he sees what opportunities are fittest, and brings about a good event with most advantage, to those that wait his time, and trust him with it: as he did to *Joseph*, the rule over his brethren; and to *David*, the possession of the kingdom. *I the Lord will hasten it in its time*, *Isaiah* 60. 22. *He will arise, and have mercy upon Sion, when the time of favour, yea, the set time is come*, *Psal.* 102. 13. And this must teach all Men, in any hopes, or pursuits of good, never to be too hasty, or, by any indirect or evil ways of their own, to take the matter out of God's hand, but patiently to wait his time, and stay till he sees fit to fulfil their expectation. *He that believeth, will not make haste*, *Isaiah* 28. 16.

Quest. But when Providence is slow in bringing long-ing desires to pass, and lays fair opportunities in their way, may not Men turn aside a little to anticipate, and prevent God's orderings?

Ans. No, for that is to take the matter out of God's hand, where it must needs succeed to best advantage, and thereby endanger, both the loss of God's favour, and of all the concurrent Mercies depending on those methods, whereby in his own time he has determined to promote, or save us. *Joseph*, when the keeper of the prison had * put the keys into his hand, might very probably have made his own escape. But had he impatiently caught at that opportunity before God's time, he had not been preferred, as he was when God delivered him. **Gen.* 39. 22, 23. And his Father *Jacob*, when he would hastily † snatch the promised birth-right by a falsehood, underwent therefore great hazards, and a long banishment; all which would probably have been saved, had he patiently stayed, till God's Wisdom had found out a way for it. †*Gen.* 27.

Quest. If God must thus give success to all means, then no design can take effect, though never so wisely laid,

laid, or powerfully backed, if it crosses the designs of his Providence ?

Ans. No ; neither such, as are managed by the deepest Counsel and Advice ; for *there is no wisdom, nor counsel, nor understanding against the Lord*, Prov. 21. 30. Nor such, as are pushed on by the most violent, and * powerful force. For though *the horse is provided against the day of battel, yet safety is from the Lord*, verle 31. 3, 7. *Psal. 66. And therefore let Men always take care wisely to fix their hearts, and hopes on such things, as they have reason to believe God will support, and then be confident, that, though to try their Faith and Patience, he may suffer them to be endangered, or distressed for a while, as he suffered *Joseph* to be imprisoned, and *David* to be persecuted, and the Church in the * Revelations to be obscured and driven from places of habitation and resort into the wilderness, yet at last he will visibly stand by the things which he doth espouse, and make them prove too hard for the most Politick, or Puissant Adversaries. † Chap. 12.

Quest. If no work can take effect without God, then no work of our Enemies. And may not this comfort us to think, that whilst he designs well for us, no contrivance, or power, of Men, or Devils, can harm us ?

Ans. It may most justly. As it did holy *David*, who when his Enemies devised to take away his life, made this his support, that whatever they contrived, his times were in God's hand, Psal. 31. 13, 15. This, says *Isaiah*, is the heritage of God's servants, no weapon shall prosper, that is formed against them ; and every tongue, that shall implead them in judgment, shall they condemn, *Isaiah* 54. 17. So that no craft, or cruelty can destroy, whilst God is minded to preserve us.

Quest. I perceive we must acknowledge God, the Donor of success to every work, or design : but is it he also that gives promotion ?

Ans. Yes, both riches, and honour come of him, in his hand is power and might, and in him it is to make great, and to give strength to all, 1 Chron. 29. 12. Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge ; he puts down one, and

setteb up another, Psal. 75. 6, 7. And therefore no Man must ever seek to exalt himself by any sinful, or indirect means, as vile flatteries, and sinful compliances, and serving wicked turns, and undermining others, and the like. For if promotion is not wholly in the will of sinful Man, but depends on the over-ruling Providence of God, these certainly are not the way to make an interest.

Quest. When a Man is a rising then, I perceive it is in no wise safe to step aside, or take up the least sin, though it seem to lie in the ready way to make his fortune?

Ans. No; when all is done, prudent integrity is the best counsellor, and the surest way to maintain a present station, or advance higher, or to have a good support, and such a kind of Providence, as will make amends, when thereby we miss of either. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely, saith Solomon, Prov. 10. 9. The integrity of the upright, says he again, shall guide, and direct them: yea, in any dangers, it shall deliver them.* But if by wicked craft, and ungodly policy, Men shall chuse to do ill to serve a turn, *the perverseness of such transgressors shall destroy them: And instead of being saved, or advanced, they shall fall by their own wickedness, and be taken in their own naughtiness, Prov. 11. 3, 5, 6. Whilst righteousness keeps him that is upright in the way, by God's usual and just Judgment, wickedness overthrows the sinner, Prov. 13. 6.*

Quest. Since God gives promotion, is not this enough to make all Men contented and satisfied, when they rest in a lower state, and see others exalted?

Ans. Yes, because their lower state is what God allows, who can easily exalt them, if he sees it convenient for his own Glory, and their good, against which, no wise Person would desire it. And it is not only the highest duty, but the truest interest of all Men, to let God chuse for them every estate; because he alone knows perfectly all the troubles and temptations of it, and their fitness for it. He understands us all far better, than the wisest of us understand our selves: and therefore best sees what condition is proper for us. Besides, if he give us less here, the day of Judgment will make

up

up all the seemingly unequal distributions of this World, so that we may hope for the more hereafter. *Lazarus*, though a very good Man, was *extreme poor*, and *full of sores*, and in this World received his evil things. But his more than ordinary wants in *this present life*, were abundantly made up by the surplussage of blifs in *Abraham's bosom*, Luke 16. 20, 21, 22, 25. And when Persons of equal goodness, have not equal encouragements of Providence allotted them in this Life, they have the more in reversion, and greater things to expect afterwards.

Quest. Doth God also give us all that favour, which we find in the Eyes of Men?

Ans. Yes, *the Lord gave Joseph favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison*, Gen. 39. 21. and *gave him favour in the sight of Pharaoh*, Act. 7. 10. and *Israel favour in the sight of the Egyptians*, Exod. 3. 21. and *Daniel favour, and tender love, with the prince of the Eunuchs*, Dan. 1. 9. The skill, and goodness, of some excellent and useful Persons, may deserve to be favoured: but *favour is not always to Men of skill*, but only where God bends the hearts of Men, and bestows it, Eccles. 9. 11. All the favour, which any Men shew us, is our good God's, who conveys it to us through their hearts, and hands.

Quest. When we come to them for any favours, is it God that helps us to address with moving Speech, and with clear and perscrative Reason, and Arguments?

Ans. Yes, and inclines them too to hearken to it, and return us soft, and gracious Answers. As *the preparation of the heart*, in him that pleads and craves favour; so *the answer of the tongue*, in him that grants it, is from the Lord, Prov. 16. 1. And therefore in all our suits, and dependances on Men, we must first seek to, and place our trust in God, For if our suit please him, he will help us so to deliver our requests, and to prefer them at such times, that they shall be sure to receive, and be pleased with them too.

Quest. And will they be sure to do this, though at the same time they are solicited, and inclined very different ways, and have in their Eye and Intention many other projects, which are ready to oppose, and juggle out ours?

Ans. Yes, for when *there are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, or that device among them all which God espouses, it shall stand, Prov. 19. 21.* And therefore in any matters, which God loves and espouses, let no good Men despond, because of the instability and unsettledness, or because of the number, interest, or oppositeness of other Counsels, whereby he is exercised, who has the disposal of them. For God can quickly alter his measures, and turn his deliberations as he will, and fix the determination where he pleases.

Quest. If we cannot have the favour of Men, but by the gift and blessing of God, must not this teach us never to commit any sin to please Men, nor do the least offence to him, in hopes thereby to ingratiate our selves with them, either to gain their favour, or to keep and retain it?

Ans. Yes, it must teach us this. For if we fall out with God, he can quickly spoil our credit, and favour with Men too. But if we keep favour with him, by holding punctually to well-doing, he rules the hearts of all Men, and can either preserve us in their favour, or protect us from their displeasure. Nay, in all likelihood, he both can, and will, not only continue to us our old Friends, who must needs secretly approve our upright dealings, though we comply not with their own private ends; but also add more. For *when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him, Prov. 16. 7.* So that Men must never neglect their own duty, or commit any sin, to please great Persons, or to keep peace with their violent, or malicious Neighbours. Let them adhere strictly to their duty, which will secure the favour of God: and then his Providence will add the favour of Men, where he sees that will do them good, or make their lives competently happy, and comfortable without it; or however, make good the want thereof to them abundantly in another World.

Quest. I see 'tis Providence that gives us Children, to recompence our cares, and perpetuate our memories, and success to our honest labours, and wealth, and honour, and favour: and is it not the same God still, that gives us both life, and health to enjoy them?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, for in him we live, move, and have our being, Act. 17. 28. When he hides his face, all things are troubled: he takes away their breath, and they die, and are turned to their dust, Psal. 104. 29. And for this we are not only thankfully to own his gift, but since we every minute live upon him, we ought by all means continually to live to him, and not lay out our health, and strength, in vice, or vanities. For whensoever these are shamefully mis-spent, 'tis but for him to hold his hand, and we are in sickness, pains, or death the next moment.

Quest. If God is thus the giver, and the restorer of health, then, when Men are in sickness, fervent Prayer is one step to a cure. And when they send for a Physician, and follow his prescriptions, they must look up to God as well as to him, and trust he will work their recovery, by what the other orders for them.

Ans. Yes, they must depend on him as the chief Physician. Men must not presume God will work without means, which were to put him to work Miracles. But when they have used the likeliest means, and taken the best ways they can, they must perfect all by Prayer and dependance on God, hoping he will give a Blessing to them. The Prayer of the Minister, as well as the prescription of the Doctor, is a proper means to recover an infirm, or sick Person. And accordingly S. James directs, any that is sick, to send for the elders of the Church, that they may pray over him, Jam. 5. 14.

Quest. From what you have said, 'tis plain that God's Providence allots for us all the good things of this life. And is it not he too, that orders for us all Spiritual advantages; not only virtuous endowments, but also all outward means and opportunities of Virtue and Religion, which must fit us for a better life?

Ans. Yes, most certainly. And therefore, as we must thankfully enjoy, and make the best use we can of those means, and opportunities God has given us: so, when they are meaner, since they are of his ordering, we must keep his way, and do no evil thing, particularly not break the Order and Unity of the Church, to find better.

Quest. I see God is the giver of every good thing, and therefore we must own all that comes well to us any way, as his Gift and Blessing.

Ans. Yes, both when we receive, and as often as we speak of them. We should not forget to thank God on all good occurrences, though coming to us from seeming accidents, or the hands of our Neighbours. Nor should we forget to do the same, on all relations of them unto others; but in speaking of any Blessings, or comfortable Enjoyments, think a serious God be thanked, most seemly and savory in all Pious Persons mouths

Quest. But as God's Providence orders for us all good events, doth he likewise order for us all evil ones?

Ans. Yes, whether those that come upon us by accident, or by ill Men, that are either private to our selves, or publick and common to the whole Church or Nation. *Out of the mouth of the most high, proceedeth not evil, and good? Lam. 3. 38. And shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it? Amos 3. 6.*

Quest. When our Friends die, is that through Providence, and doth God take them?

Ans. Yes, albeit they are snatched away untimely by evil accidents, which, though casual to us, are foreseen and ordered by him. In his hand are life and death, so that whensoever our Friends die, he calls them. And this must teach us patiently to bear their loss; yea, moreover, to trust him to make up the want of them some other ways, though their life seemed not only very useful, but almost necessary to us. For let our Friends be as useful, as they will; they are only his instruments. It is he that gives them, both the inclination, the skill, and the opportunity to help us. And he that supplied us by them, can supply us without them, he can, when he pleases, raise up others, or put us into a way and capacity to provide for our selves. So that no Person can be Friendless, but is rich in Friends, who has a Friend of God, and is under a good Providence. And one of the surest ways to make him a Friend, when others are gone is to trust him.

Quest.

Quest. This is satisfactory, as to the loss, but oh! the misfortune of the time. For they were taken away just then, when we promised our selves most pleasure in them, which made us most desirous to keep, and loth to part with them.

Ans. If we believe, that a most Wise God took them; in all modesty we should believe too, that he knows what are the most convenient, and fittest Seasons, for Friends to part in.

Quest. I see when God takes a Friend from us, we must submit, and trust him. But doth it not shew he is angry with us, when he tears a Friend from our sides?

Ans. No, perhaps, it is only because he is pleased with them, and would take them to himself. And we ought not to judge he hates us, for loving those that we love.

Quest. When we suffer by mischances, or ill accidents, in our Bodies, or Goods, are those sufferings from Providence?

Ans. Yes, it not only foresees, but times the evils to be ready when we are in the way, and orders and directs them for us. If *the lot* fall against us, when *'tis cast into the lap, the whole disposal thereof is from the Lord*, Prov. 16. 33. If a Man is accidentally maimed, or murdered, 'tis chance-medly and accident in him that hurt, or slew him, but design in God, who says the *Scripture* in this case, *delivered the man into his hand*, Exod. 21. 13. And this must reach Men in all unlucky chances, and unfortunate accidents, not to vent themselves in wrath and foolish passion, against the immediate occasions, whether inanimate things that could not, or undesigning Persons that did not intend any ill to them: but to look up to God, with humility and patience under what they feel, and thankfulness for all they have escaped. For in him only the evil accident was design; and against him, who justly can, or dare complain?

Quest. This is well as to unfortunate accidents. But what if our hopes or happiness are damped, or our maladies made worse, yea, perhaps, irremediable, by gross heedlessness, or unkindness and hard-heartedness, or other exasperating faultiness or over-sights, of our
seeming

seeming Friends, or Servants, or others that are concerned about us? 'Tis easier to bear, when we are made miserable by God's Providence; but it grates hard when their faultiness makes us so, of whom we might well expect better things?

Ans. Though they are the actors, God's Providence is the orderer of these misfortunes: which therefore are to be undergone with the same patience. For as a good Wife or Husband, so a wife and good Servant, or Friend, is God's gift. And when God chastises and smites us, by such as are exasperatingly unkind, or mischievously careless, we must own his Justice in their neglects, and submit to them as we do to a Disease, that is, reckon them among that burden, or share of suffering, which God has allotted for us in this life.

Quest. Is it Providence still, that lends us any crosses, and obstructions, in our designs and business?

Ans. Yes, those crosses come from him, to exercise our Faith, where he approves of our pursuits; or to disappoint and put us by, where he dislikes them. And this must teach us patience, as often as we meet with them.

Quest. 'Tis enough, indeed, to stop all complaints, that any thing is of his doing. But can you say moreover, that these crosses are for ends both of Grace, and Wisdom?

Ans. Yes, to all those that love him. If they come to defeat their projects, they shall see at last that it is in favour to them: or if only to backen them, that is, but to respite them for a more advantageous issue at a fitter season; nay, perhaps, these seeming backners, will at last appear the truest promoters to help them on. If Men will have patience till all is done, their crosses and misadventures will appear most orderly, proper, and beautiful in their time, when they have seen on to the end of the chain, and viewed the whole frame and dependance of God's ordering. And therefore upon any cross occurrences, Men must not be hasty in judging, to discourage and discontent their hearts: but wait God's time with Patience, Hope, and implicate Faith, till the end of things discovers his most Wise, and Gracious Purpose.

Quest.

Quest. But what if in the height of our hopes, and probabilities, some cross accident starts up, that is like to break all our measures?

Ans. If God sees good to make our hopes take place, he can make our crosses carry on our desires to advantage. For 'tis his Prerogative to bring light out of darkness; to make use of weak things to worst the strong, and of foolish things to confound the wise, 1 Cor. 1. 27. And he has declared, that all things shall work together for good, to those that love God, Rom. 8. 28. But then they must commit their case to his conduct, and trust him with it.

Quest. But the evil accident happens at that very time, which of all others seems most unseasonable, and fit to pull down all they have been so long a building up?

Ans. Though it doth, to God the easiness of accomplishing his Gracious Purposes, is still the same. It only gets him the greater Glory, in making the crossiest events serve such turns, as are beside all expectation, and he chuses to work by such improbable means, to shew his over-ruling Wisdom. What, in appearance, would be worse timed, than the dissension of Paul and Barnabas, two chief Ministers, in an Infant-Church. Yet this God turned to the furtherance of the Gospel, by dividing them, like two great Streams, for the watering of more Countries; Paul going through Syria and Cilicia, and Barnabas to Cyprus Act. 15. 39, 40, 41. And therefore we must never be immoderately troubled, or dejected, at private, or publick mischances, falling out most unseasonably to cross our hopes, either for our particular Interests, or for God's Holy Church. For when God is engaged for us, he over-rules, as the greatest evils, so the crossiest seasons too to serve his own purpose.

Quest. Sickness, loss of friends, and crosses and mischances, that could not be foreseen, I see plainly are the Hand of God. But when we suffer from ill Men, are those evils also of God's sending?

Ans. Yes, for the wicked are God's sword, Psal. 17. 3. He over-rules the most troublesom, and ungodly Men, to serve his own turn: the Lord hath made, or disposed all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day

day of evil, that is, to vent themselves there, where he sees fit to send evil, *Prov.* 16. 4. They are his instruments, whereby he either exercises our patience, or corrects our disobedience.

Quest. If 'tis God that afflicts us by them, and they are but as a Rod or Instrument in his Hand; when they design to vex, and hurt us, he can put by their design?

Ans. Yes, and often doth; as he put by *Abimelech* from committing wickedness, by a terrifying dream, *Gen.* 20. 3, 6. and *Pharaoh*, by sending great plagues upon him, *Gen.* 12. 17. His Providence can at any time throw in their way a discouraging reason, a diverting fear, an inward relenting, or expose some other object to their hurtful passion; and divert it from him whom it fixed first upon. Even the heart of kings, says *Solomon*, who having no Superiors here, seem most of all left to their own wills, are in God's hand to derive into any channels or courses, as the rivers of water are in the Husbandman's, to bring them over what part of his Ground he pleases, *Prov.* 21. 1. whereof we have abundant instances, both in Holy Scripture and Experience.

Quest. And when they are fully fixed to do us hurt, yet since they are under his conduct and direction; let them desire, and endeavour it as much as they will, they cannot do us any hurt before his time?

Ans. That is very right. And this was plain in the wicked Jews, who, though they sought with all their might to kill *Christ*: yet either he secretly withdrew himself, at the very point of time, when they thought to lay hands on him, *Luke* 4. 29, 30. or the officers hearts relented, who were sent to apprehend him, *John* 7. 32, 44, 45, 46. or they were providentially struck with a startling fear, that the People, who held him for a Prophet, would rise upon them, *Matth.* 21. 46. Some thing, or other, stood always ready to put them by, because his hour was not yet come, *John* 7. 30. But when God's own time drew on, his Providence, which was a Wall of Bricks about him before, laid him open to their spite, and then they wrought their wills upon him: this is your hour and the power of darkness, *Luke*

32. 53. And so it was also in *Job's* case. Whilst God set an hedge about him, no Enemy could annoy him: and till God had said, *all he has is in thine hand*, Satan himself could not bring his mischievous instruments, the *Sabeans*, and *Chaldeans* upon him, *Job* 1. 10, 12, 15, 17.

Quest. And when that time is come, can they exceed his bounds, or afflict further than he has allowed them?

Ans. No; for though the *Jews*, to increase *Christ's* pain, designed to break his *Legs*, as well as the *Legs* of the other Malefactors, as he hung upon the cross: yet, by the speediness of his death, God prevented them, to fulfil the Scripture, which saith, *a bone of him shall not be broken*, *John* 19. 33, 36. And when the *Corinthians* were full of fears, and apprehensive of great trials, *S. Paul* tells them, *God is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able, but will make a way to escape so much of the temptation, as would prove over-hard for you*, *1 Cor.* 10. 13. And this has been the general experience of *God's* Servants, who, as *S. Paul* speaks, might be troubled on every side, but distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed, *2 Cor.* 4. 8, 9.

Quest. And as God stints the measure, as well as appoints the season, doth he also fix the length and duration of our sufferings from evil Men?

Ans. Yes, that is not left to their malice, but as soon as our sufferings have accomplished *God's* ends, he will take care to alter the counsels, and course of things. The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished, *2 Pet.* 2. 9. And in proportioning this continuance, he uses great care, and tenderness to his Servants, that their sufferings may not outlast their patience, or wear out their hope in him. The rod of the wicked shall not rest, or make a fixt abode, and stay too long upon the lot of the righteous, lest it put them upon desperate counsels, and the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity, *Psal.* 125. 3.

Quest. If wicked Men are thus an instrument in *God's* Hand, then whatever evils we suffer from them, we must

not

not look only at the immediate actors, but see beyond them to Almighty God, and own his Providence.

Ans. Yes, and that will not only teach us to please him, and to apply our selves to him for redress; but teach us patience too, because how undeserved soever they may be from others, yet we have deserved a thousand times worse at his hands. *Let him curse,* says David of wicked *Shimei*, and would return no ill again, for the Lord hath bidden him, 2 Sam. 16. 10, 11. and *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because thou didst it,* Psal. 39. 9. Nay, it will teach us willingness in submission. For be the Cup untoothsome, and bitter as Gall and Wormwood: yet he is both our God, and our Father, that offers it, and we should not suspect any hurt, in what comes from his Hand. *The cup, which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* said our Blessed Lord of the unparalleled injuries which he suffered; John 18. 11.

Quest. But if, when Men wickedly afflict us, you say, God sends these afflictions; will it not excuse them to say, God gives them success against us, and they follow Providence?

Ans. No, in no wise. For God doth not excite, or tempt them to injure us. But when they are injurious of themselves, his Providence sets us in their way, that their wickedness may spend it self upon us, to exercise our Faith and Patience, or to chastise our disobedience. So that they are accountable for their own wickedness, and when they will be wicked, all he doth is to over-rule it to serve his own designs: as he did in the murder of our Blessed Saviour, which he ordered for the Salvation of the World, though the Jews *slew him by wicked hands,* Act. 2. 23. When we suffer by other Mens sins, God, who punishes us by them, will punish them for them, as he declared of the *Assyrian*, the rod of his indignation, Is. 10. 5, 12, 17. and as all wicked Slanders, Oppressors, Thieves, Rebels, and Murderers, shall find to their cost in the end. It is not acting successfully, but acting according to our Duty, which will justify what we do, when God comes to judge us.

Quest. But if 'tis Providence, that sends wicked and violent Oppressors, since it is the Patron of Justice, as well as the Chastiser of Uncharitableness, sure God will

not continue to such Men the Power to oppress always?

Ans. No; the more violent and boisterous any wicked Oppressor is, the sooner will his Power fail him, and spend it self. *The wicked Oppressor, says Solomon, passes as a whirl-wind, which may for a while storm terribly, and bluster, but is quickly over, Prov. 10. 25. The rod of his anger shall fail; that is, the Might, or even the Authority whereby he scourges, shall not bear him out, or preserve him in unjust violence: but by abusing Power, he shall soon lose it, and then reap that trouble which he has justly deserved, Prov. 21. 8. And therefore when any are oppressed by Porent Neighbours, or Men of Violence, they may support themselves to think, that God sees all their wrongs, and in due time will give them ease.*

Quest. I see, that those evils, which befall our selves in our own particulars, are the allotment of Providence. But if there be any miscarriages of State and Government, must the People look upon these too to be of God's sending?

Ans. Yes, and generally as a punishment for the wickedness, and provocations of a Nation. *For the transgressions of a land, many are the princes thereof, Prov. 28. 2. And through the anger of the Lord being kindled against Israel, God moved David, that is, left him to be won by * Satan moving him, to number the people, 2 Sam. * 1 Chron. 24. 1. So that in any publick miscarriages, we must not spend our selves in exclaiming against Ministers of State, and the Instruments concerned therein: but look up to the Justice of Almighty God, and reflect with patience, and penitent hearts, upon our own sins, which are punished in them.*

Quest. But must we think God's Providence directs and disposes, when Publick Affairs are most tumultuary and irregular, and seem to shew forth fewest footsteps of his perfections?

Ans. Yes, *the Lord reigns, though the people tremble through convulsive and distracting fears; he sitteth between the cherubims, though the earth be moved with the violence of stirs and tumults, Psalm 99. 1. And this must support all good Men in the most dangerous, and distracted times, because even then they are still under God,*

God, and are not at the Mercy of all the ill chances and threatening evils, that fly round about them, which, how loose soever they may seem to fly abroad, are yet all bound up in God's Hand.

Quest. If 'tis God, that sends all these evils, then whensoever any of them threaten and hang over us, we must look up to him, and have Faith in his Providence.

Ans. Yes, and that too, though we seem reduced almost to irremediable extremities. For God loves to delay deliverance to the last, that our Faith and dependence, may be more thoroughly tried; and then shows himself nearest to us, when we have no more hope left in our selves, or in any humane means. Thus he appeared not to *save Isaac's life*, till *Abraham's hand was stretched out* to take it away, Gen 22. 10, 11. And then God comes as a *present help*, when we are in the very *time of need*, Psalm 46. 1. & Heb. 4. 16. He chuses the time of our distress, to give us a more affecting sense of our deliverance. And then too he often works it, by those very things, which seem not only unprofitable, but opposite, and apt to hinder it: that no part of the honour of it may go to humane means, but that the whole of it may be ascribed to himself.

Quest. You have shown that God orders all those ill events, which cross accidents, or ill Men bring upon us; and which may befall us, meerly through the good pleasure of God, or the free-wills of others, without any misuse of our own Wills. But what say you to those, which, by abuse of our own free-wills we voluntarily bring upon our selves, by our own gross faults, or follies? Must they be ascribed, as the former were, to God's Providence?

Ans. No; this *Solomon* taxes in fond sinners, that when *the foolishness of man perverteth his way*, and he falls because he is *Ignorant*, or rash and *hasty with his feet*: yet for all this, *his heart fretteth against the Lord*, as if not his own pure folly, but God had brought him to it, Prov. 19. 2, 3. The most Holy God forbids all our faults, and the most Wise God disclaims all our follies, which we must not ascribe to him, but take to our selves. As all Persons must do, when they throw away themselves in foolish Marriages, or throw away their Estates by

extra-

extravagance, and foolish projects, or are any other ways the direct Authors of their own miseries, which they bring upon themselves by going against his Will, either in such sins as he forbids, or in such follies as he disapproves. When our calamities are thus of our own seeking, we must not remove the blame from off our selves by casting it on God, and say they are of his sending. *Say not thou, as the wise Son of Sirach most piously and justly cautions, it is through the Lord that I fell away; for thou oughtest not to do the things, that he hateth. Say not thou, he hath caused me to err: for he hath not need of the sinful man. He hath commanded no man to do wickedly, neither hath he given any man Licence to sin, Ecclus. 15. 11, 12, 20.*

Quest. By this, I perceive, when any Persons have made a foolish Marriage, or otherwise done foolishly for themselves; you would not have them say, as too ordinarily they do, that such a Match was made in Heaven, and is what God had decreed for them.

Ans. No, by no means. For that is only to make God accountable for their faults. And is it fit, when they are ashamed of a thing, to lay it upon God to excuse themselves? God bids no Man do foolishly, or wickedly; nor tempts him to it. *Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with evil, neither doth he tempt any man, James 1. 13.*

Quest. But doth God no way allot these for us?

Ans. Yes, he allots the miseries as a punishment, after we have been so faulty, or foolish: but he doth not allot that foolish miscarriage, whereby we bring the misery upon our own heads. For God is not the Author, either of the sins, or of the follies of Men, being in himself all Holiness, and Wisdom. What is well done by us, we must ascribe to him, but all that is ill, we must take to our own selves.

Quest. But is he not sometimes concerned in sending Mens faults and follies too, as well as the miseries, in punishment of former provocations? For when Men have been great sinners, he is oft provoked,

voked, as you noted above, to withdraw his Grace from them in just Judgment, and to leave them to themselves, whence they fall still into more folly, and wickedness.

Ans. Yes, by way of punishment, God sometimes gives Men up thus to sin, and folly. Nor that he tempts, or inclines Men, to be either foolish, or wicked, as I said : but that, when they are thoroughly prepared of themselves to be so, in his just judgment the withdraws his abused Grace, the continuance whereof might help to prevent it, and leaves them to themselves, and to the incitation of evil Spirits, as I have before declared.

Quest. So that if any Persons would ascribe any share in their own willful miscarriages to God, it must only be in owning his Justice, and taking shame to themselves, confessing he Righteously gave them up to them, in punishment of former sins ?

Ans. Yes.

Quest. You have instanced in foolish Marriages : and I see we must not impute them to Destiny, and God's irresistible Decrees, which is only a throwing the blame on God to clear our selves. But do not you think, that the Providence of God, which numbers even the Hairs of our Heads, is more than ordinarily concerned in making Marriages, (whether happy or unhappy) which are an affair of highest importance ?

Ans. I make no doubt of it. *Houses, and lands, are the inheritance of fathers ; but a prudent wife is from the Lord.* Prov. 19. 14. & 18. 22. But when God's Providence orders, and accomplishes Marriages, it is not by fate, and irresistible ways ; but only by affording such opportunities and inducements, as, though oft-times they may very potently induce, yet leave a liberty in the Persons themselves, I suppose, especially ere they are suffered to proceed too far, to refuse. When God brings them about, it is in a way agreeable to free Creatures, who have a liberty to refuse, and voluntarily of themselves take hold of these offers and facilitating turn of Providence, to bring about their own Marriages ; whence, being a mat-

ter

ter of their own doing, they are accountable for them, and deserve Praise when they bestow themselves wisely, and blame when they do foolishly.

Quest. As for all the Actions, which we do then, I perceive we must believe that God observes them. And as for all the good or ill events, which we meet with in this World, we must believe he orders and allots them for us, and be accordingly affected with them?

Ans. Yes, and that is *walking before God*, as *Abraham* was bid to do, *Gen. 17. 1.* and owning Providence, which is the ground of all Religion, and the great Character through all the *Scriptures* of good Men: and is not only the perfection of our affection, and service to Almighty God; but the only Ground of Solid Comfort and Tranquillity of Mind, under all the various Accidents of this World.

Quest. Is this Great and Good God, that made and still preserves, and carefully provides for us, not only our Friend, but also *our Father*?

Ans. Yes, he is the Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, and for his sake, he is *our Father* too. And so he has taught us to call him, and pray, *Our Father which art in Heaven*, &c.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Ans. Not only to take the freedom of access, and the confidence; but withal to pay the Reverence, and dutiful Obedience of Children. *If I be a father, where is mine honour?* *Mal. 1. 6.* To imitate the ways and virtues of our Heavenly Father, and turn followers of God as dear Children, *Eph. 5. 1.* this being a Natural Fruit of Spiritual, as it usually is of Secular Relation. It must engender noble Thoughts and Pursuits, worthy of this high Alliance, and not suffer us to debase our selves, and dishonour our Race, by sinking into sensuality, or doting on, and taking up with any vain and perishing goods of this Life. In summ, it must cause us to depend on him, with trust and affiance; to receive what he sends, with submission, and cheerfulness, and an Opinion that it proceeds

ceeds from kindness; with other such like, which are filial tempers.

Quest. And this God, and Father, the Creed says, is *Almighty*, and *the maker of Heaven and Earth*.

Ans. Yes, that is added, and is next in course to be explained.

Of God's Almightyness.

CHAP. III.

Of God's Almightyness.

The Contents.

God's Almightyness implies, 1. God's Might and Strength to effect all things, viz. all that are the object of any Power. And that are not repugnant to his own Nature. The exerting this Power creates God no labour. He can do, whatsoever any things of the World can do. This an encouragement to all generous Enterprizes. And to build on Providence, especially where we have a Promise. The value and acceptance of this trust, in a seemingly most improbable case. And whatsoever any things of the World are inclined, or wont to do, he can hinder them from doing. This also a ground of trust in God. And to keep us in any distress, from flying to unlawful aids. How God will use this Power. 2. His Sovereignty and Power, to command, and order all things. This includes, 1. Empire, as a Sovereign Ruler. What things God may command. The unalterableness of some commands. 2. Dominion, as a Sovereign Proprietor. In what cases God allots good and ill, out of his Power of Prerogative, not according to Mens pre-dispositions. Where he dispenses Arbitrarily, he doth it always most Wisely, and Reasonably. Saving Grace he allots, not in way of Arbitrary Prerogative, but according to Covenant Rules. And Heaven and Hell, in way of Legal Tryals. A brief account of the Rectitude of God's Nature which limits his Sovereign Will, from the Scriptures. This Sovereign Lord and Proprietor an All-sufficient, so no selfish Being. Several good uses of God's

Sovereign Dominion. God's Majesty and Almightyness, must beget fear and reverence.

Question. **T**HE Almighty Power of God, is one thing particularly professed in the *Creed*, and when God would give a Character of himself, he told *Abraham* he was *the Almighty God*, Gen. 17. 1. Is this Attribute of so great account, that in so short a Summary it should be singled out, and particularly mentioned?

Ans. Yes, for since God has an Almighty Power over all, all must fear and submit to him. Since he is able to do all things, his Friends and Servants have cause to trust in him, and depend on him, and in all their wants to seek and address to him for convenient supplies. So that his Almighty Power, is a main ground of all Religious Service, of Fear, and Faith, of Trust in God, and of all Devotion.

Quest. What is meant by God's Almightyness?

Ans. Two things: 1. That he has might and Strength, to effect and do. And, 2. That he has Sovereignty and Power, to command and order all things?

Quest. Has God all Might and Strength, to effect and do all things?

Ans. Yes, all that are the object of any Power, and all that are not repugnant to his own Nature. He made all this World, and can at his Will make more; and *nothing shall be impossible with God*, Luke 1. 37.

Quest. Why do you say all that are the object of any Power?

Ans. Because contradictions are the object of no Power; and though an Almighty Arm must be sufficient for one part of them, as who, by his bare Word, can at his Will speak all things, either out of, or into nothing; yet it is no way concerned to fulfil both at the same time. Thus is it no diminution to the Power of God, that it cannot make twice two, cease to be four, or that which is past nor to have been, or one and the same Body to be at once in many and far distant places, and yet under all this multiplicity to be but one, because they all imply a contradiction, that is, that a thing should be somewhat, and withal that it should not be it, at the same time.

Quest.

Quest. And why do you add, All that are not Repugnant to his own Nature?

Ans. Because, as God's power is infinite, so is every other Attribute, and one must not destroy, or weaken another, but all must consist together. Thus, though, as *Christ* said, *to God all things are possible*, Matth. 19. 26. yet, as *St. Paul* saith, *it is impossible for God to lye*, Heb. 6. 18. He cannot be sick, or weary, or sleepy. He cannot be unjust, or cruel, or unfaithful, or delight in ill, or be ignorant of any thing, or change any of his excellencies, or cease to be himself, or make other Gods besides himself, or be any other ways imperfect, more than he can be weak and impotent. The properties, and perfections of the Divine Nature, are unalterable by the Divine Power: and it is no more a matter of God's Power, to hinder himself from being Pure, or Just, or Good; than it is in the power of the Sun, to restrain it self from giving Light; or of the Fire, from giving heat; or of any other thing, from doing what is natural, and necessary to it. Whatsoever the Divine Pleasure can will, that the Divine Power can execute: but God's Will that controuls all things else, doth never contradict his own Nature, but is always suited to, and ruled by it.

Quest. And when God exerts this Power in doing things, doth it create him any labour and pains?

Ans. No, he makes or unmakes every thing, with a bare word of his mouth, as he did at the Creation. We, indeed, are imperfect Natures, and activity spends our Powers; and the things which we go to alter and act upon, are stubborn in sticking to their own Natures, and make resistance: on which accounts, our actings cause trouble and weariness. But all things obey every inclination, and tendency of God, with an intire submission; and his Power is absolute and Infinite, so that if he doth but will any thing, immediately it is done. And therefore it is a vain fancy, and ignorant complement of the *Epicureans* of old, and of all the Enemies of Providence in later times, who would exclude God from the Inspection, Ordering, and Government of the World, in pretence thereby to secure his ease and self-enjoyment, and to keep back trouble and toil from him.

Quest. Can God do, whatsoever any things in the World can do?

Ans. Yes, for he gave them all their Power of doing it. And retaining still the same Power in himself, which he communicated to them, as he ordinarily doth things by them, so, when he pleases, can he do the same without them. Thus can he preserve Life without Meat, as he did to *Moses, Elias*, and our *Saviour Christ*, in their *forty days fast*; and restore Health, without the help of Physick; and give Children to those who are past Child-bearing, as he did to *Sarah*; and make a Maid a Mother without the help of a Father, as in the Generation of our *Saviour*; and give us Bodies without all help of Parents, as he did out of the dust of the earth at first to *Adam*, and as he will do at last to all in the *general Resurrection*.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Ans. Not only to believe him in those Articles of Religion, which seem hardest in Nature to be brought to pass, as *Christ's being born of a virgin*, and the *general resurrection*: but also to take heart and courage, in all honest and prudent enterprizes, and not suddenly to desist, or despair of success, through the number, and greatness of discouragements. All virtuous, publick, and generous undertakings, are both acceptable and honourable to God; and so, (tho not always sure thereof, as not suiting many times with his other Wise ends,) are however, more like to have a fast Friend of Providence. And when this really proves so, and God espouses any cause, though there be little probability, and preparation for it in Natural appearance, yet will it surely come to pass, since he has the Power and Probability of all his Creatures in himself.

Quest. Indeed, Men so backed, must needs speed designs, where there are fewer visible preparations, and find success beyond appearances.

Ans. Yes, and the prospect of that animated the *Apostles* to go on courageously in *converting the World*, an attempt impossible in all human judgment. And all *Antient*, and *Modern Worthies*, to set on any *Publick Reformations* in evil times, and to do the World good against their wills. And all honest Men, whose cause was good, and dear to God, to hope he would stand by

by it, and restore it, even when they saw it reduced to the last extremities. In summ, in licentious times, it has heretofore, and must still strengthen *Magistrates*, in asserting Laws and Justice; and *Ministers*, in preaching down prevailing errors, and reigning vices; and all *Publick Spirits*, in pursuing Pious, or Charitable Projects; and all *Good Men*, in supporting the oppressed, in curbing vice, in breaking wicked customs, in setting on any great honour of God, or good Men, in their several stations. They must not hastily think they shall not be able to effect, what they have cause to hope God will set forward: but believe, as *S. Paul* said, that *they can do all things, through Christ strengthening them*, Phil. 4. 13. But then their hope and confidence must still be fixed in God, not in themselves, or in outward aids: and when they go to meet difficulties, it must be as *David* did to meet *Goliath*, only in the Name of the Lord of hosts, 1 Sam. 17. 45.

Quest. Must this consideration, of God's having in him the Power of all his Creatures, teach us any thing else?

Ans. Yes, to trust his Providence for the supply of any of our wants, especially where he has given us any Word and Promise. Nay, then to hold on trusting, even in the most destitute cases, and against all probabilities. For all things, even the hardest and most improbable, are equally easie unto God, so that nothing must seem improbable, which he declares he will bring about. When Faith and Trust is in Man or in any Earthly thing, it is ruled by probability. But when it is in a Power Almighty, it makes no difference of likely, or unlikely. As *Abraham's* Faith did not, when he believed God's Promise to send him a son, though at that time, both *Sarah*, and he, were too old in course of Nature to have one: and to make that Son a numerous seed, which he firmly believed at the same time when he was commanded to offer him up, and so could have no Son by him, unless he were first restored to him from the dead.

Quest. This, indeed, shows a high esteem, and confidence in God, to rely upon his Word when there is not the least sign of its taking effect, but things look, as if there were no way for it to be effected.

Ans.

Ans. Yes, so it doth. And therefore among all acts of Religion, there is none that doth more endear Men to God. This our Father Abraham found, it being upon this account, that he became so dear to God, as to be called the friend of God, Jam. 2. 23. and the father of the faithful, Rom. 4. 11. 16. and that his bosom should be made the receptacle of the blessed, Luke 16. 22. For his Faith, saith the Apostle, above all his other virtues, was imputed to him for righteousness, Rom. 4. 3, 9. And among all his acts of Faith, God was pleased to impute those to him, as the most notable, which were shown in these two difficult instances. He staggered not at the unlikelihood of his having a son, but was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform: and therefore, saith S. Paul, it was imputed unto him for righteousness, Rom. 4. 19, 20, 21, 22. And when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar, says S. James, then the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness: and he was called the friend of God, Jam. 2. 21, 23. Such is the extraordinary value, and recompence, of trusting God in a seemingly most improbable, and desperate case, where 'tis visibly put to a push of Omnipotence to make good his Promise.

Quest. I see God can do, whatsoever any things in the World can do. But can he also hinder any things in the World, from doing whatsoever they are naturally bent, or wont to do?

Ans. Yes, for as by him they were all made, so, as
 * Aft. 17. the Apostle * says, in him they still subsist, and move,
 28. and operate: and therefore whensoever he pleases to suspend, or withdraw their Power, they have no longer use of it. Thus the † fire could not consume, nor singe
 † Dan. 3. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego; nor the * hungry
 27. Lyons fasten on the Prophet Daniel; nor the * venomous
 * Dan. 6. Beast sting the Holy Apostle; nor the † destroying Angel
 22. touch an Israelite; nor the * Plague, or Pestilence, or
 * Aft. 28. 5. other contagious Disease, infect or seize the Psalmist;
 † Exod. nor the † wicked Jews act their spite on our Saviour
 12. 13, 23. Christ; nor the * Infernal Spirits touch Job, or try his
 * Psal. 91. Patience, whilst God was pleased to withhold them.
 1, 6, 7, 8. He suspends the Operations of all hurtful Creatures,
 † John 7. evil Men, and wicked Spirits, at his Will: so that they
 30. & 2. 6. invade

invade no Person, and act at no time, but only when, and so far as he allows them.

Quest. And what must this teach us?

Ans. Not hastily to conclude any case of good Men desperate, and incapable of cure, or ease. For when dangers, or disasters, from the most hurtful things, or Persons, threaten most, 'tis but for God to interpose, and either divert, or suspend their power, and then the most fierce and mischievous things become tame and harmless, and the dangers from them little, or none at all. And thus he is wont to interpose for good Men; rescuing them, as he did Holy *David* frequently, out of the very jaws of Death; and saving them, as he did *S. Paul*, after he *had the sentence of death in himself*, 2 Cor. 1. 9.

Quest. But what if we are at the last extremities? must we hope still, when evil is fastning upon us, or at the very door?

Ans. Yes, if we have any express promise of deliverance: for God, as I noted formerly, never forgets his Word, though sometimes he may delay the performance of it to the last. Or, if we have an express command for the work, wherein the danger meets us, as *S. Peter* had for coming to *Christ upon the water*. For since *Christ* bid him do the thing, he should have hoped to the end, that he would stand by him, and therefore was rebuked for *doubting and staggering in Faith*, though it were when *the wind was boisterous*, ready to bury him in every Wave, and *he already began to sink*, *Matth.* 14. 29, 30, 31. Or, lastly, if we have no other claim for relief, but only from God's Providence, whose Protection we may generally presume on in his own ways, and in pursuit of all good and prudent enterprizes: as our Lord intimates, when he rebukes *the Apostles for want of Faith in fearing Shipwrack*, though they neither had any particular command to Sail, nor express promise of a safe Voyage, but were to ground this Faith on being under his Protection, and going on lawful Errands, *Matth.* 8. 24, 25, 26. God very commonly suffers good Mens dangers, which at last he designs to remove, to go on first to the greatest extremities, that their Faith and Trust may pass through a more full trial, and illustrious exercise.

Quest.

Quest. Must it teach us any thing else ?

Ans. Yes, *Secondly*, in no case to forsake God, and fly to any Foreign and unlawful Aids. For if we stick to him, this over-ruling Power, when things are at the worst, can with a Word put all the evil by, and rescue us. And if we forsake him, he can as easily turn that Power against us, and make us fall by our own succours. For as this Almighty Arm, is able to bring all things about for us ; so, when it pleases, can it also bring them about against us, in spite of all probabilities.

Quest. This is a stupendious height of Power : how will God employ it ?

Ans. In making good all his Promises, and executing all his Threatnings, heaping Favours on his Friends and faithful Servants, and Judgments on his Enemies. So that all Holy Men shall taste the sweetness of it, in endearing Providences and Preservations, (tho under many and great Tryals and Afflictions,) in this World, as *Jacob, Joseph, David*, and the *Patriarchs*, and pious Men of old did : and in Glorious, and endless Rewards in the next. And wicked Men shall feel the smart of it, in all the crosses, and penal inflictions of this Life, whereof if, thro' Gods Forbearance, they at any times feel the less here at present, that is only their being Respited and reserved to bear the heavier and more insupportable Load at last ; and in the everlasting torments of the Life to come.

Quest. If this irresistible Power, were not to be thus justly, and kindly used, though we should basely fear and dread, yet should we not love and value him that has it ?

Ans. No, for nothing is so hateful, as power in the hands of malice, which makes us have such an utter hatred of the powers of darkness. And this must teach all ambitious Men, never to covet ; and all Potent Men, never to employ their Power, to oppress, or tyrannize, to accomplish unlawful Lusts, or to work their wills on others. But only to encourage Virtue, and reward it, to protect the innocent, relieve the oppressed curb the vicious, or some way or other to do good with it.

Quest.

Quest. Another Branch of God's Almightyness, you said, is his *Sovereignty* and Power, to command, and order all things. What mean you by God's *Sovereignty*?

Ans. His Supreme Authority, being accountable to none, but having Power to order, and injoyne all things, as seemeth fittest to his own Wisdom.

Quest. What doth this imply?

Ans. Two things: both *Empire*, that is, a Power to injoyne and command as a Ruler; and *Dominion*, that is, a Power to allot and dispose as a Proprietor. God may give any Commands, and exact them of any Persons, as an absolute Governour: and make any distributions of Things, or allotment of States and Conditions, as an absolute Lord and Proprietor. And he is Sovereign in both these, being bound to please none, but only to order as seems best to himself.

Quest. Doth God exercise over the World a Sovereign Empire?

Ans. Yes, all other Rulers, as the *Apostle* says, are but his *ministers*, Rom. 13. 4. but he still keeps the controlling Power, and the Reins of Government in his own Hands, being *the blessed, and only Potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords*, 1 Tim. 6. 15. *He hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all*, Psalm 103. 19. And this Empire he exercises, in giving and exacting all Commands, and guiding and directing all Actions, and turns in the World, as he pleases.

Quest. Has God an absolute, and unlimited Power, to command all things?

Ans. Yes all that his Creatures, by his Grace, are capable of doing; and all that his most Holy, and Perfect Nature, is capable of injoyning.

Quest. Why do you say, all his Creatures, by his Grace, are capable of doing?

Ans. Because his most just, and equitable Government, cannot impose an impossible thing. His Laws, indeed, might be impossible to us, considered naked in our own strength, but not as consider'd under those assistances, and under that strength, which he is ready to afford us. He doth not reap where he has not sown, and whatsoever his Laws require, his Spirit will assist
Men

Men to perform, *His commandments are not grievous,* 1 John 5. 3. and *his yoke is easie, and its burden light,* Matth. 11. 30.

Quest. Why do you add also, all that his most Holy, and Perfect Nature, is capable of injoyning?

Ans. To shew he doth not give Commands out of unlimited Will, and Arbitrariness; but doth all according to unalterable Principles of Goodness, and Justice. He may command whatsoever he will: but then he cannot will all that we may fantasie, but only all that is like himself, *i. e.* all that is Wise, and Good. He never Wills against the Perfection of his Nature, because he will do it.

Quest. I perceive then, that God having commanded Holiness, and Justice, and Mercifulness, and Truth, and Faithfulness, and the like, which are his own Natural Perfections, there is no possibility of his reverting these Commands to shew unlimitedness of Will, and commanding their contraries.

Ans. No; in commanding these Virtues, he only commands us to be like himself: to be *holy as he is holy,* perfect in kindness *as he is perfect,* as the * Scripture says. And being Transcripts of his own Perfections, these Virtues are a limitation to his Will, and whilst he is himself, he can never will them to be otherwise. Indeed, it is his Command, which makes them become duties to us, and instances of our obedience: but that, which made him command them, was the Goodness which they had antecedent to his Command, as being Draughts of his own Perfections. He willed them, because they were good, and like himself. And he being unchangeable, they must be always like him, and upon that account he must always will them; whence they are said to be duties of Essential, and Eternal Goodness and Obligation.

Quest. Doth God exercise this Empire also in guiding and directing all Actions, and Turns in the World, as he pleases?

Ans. Yes, he doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, *What dost thou?* as Nebuchadnezzar most justly acknowledged, when he re-

turned

* 1 Pet. 1.
16.
Matth. 5
48.

turned to himself, Dan. 4. 35. He presides in all Councils, and directs, and over-rules all Actions and Events. *I form the light, and create darkness, I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things,* Isaiah 45. 7. And this Administration of things, is called his Providence, which has already been discoursed of.

Quest. Has God also a Sovereign Dominion, to dispose of all things, and allot to each their different States and Conditions, as a Supreme Proprietor?

Ans. Yes, his Hand made all things, bestowing upon them both the Workmanship and the Materials, and his Power still preserves them, and all this for what uses he pleases. *Thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created,* Rev. 4. 11. *As the clay is in the potters hand, to form it into a Vessel either honourable, or base, so are ye in my hand, saith the Lord,* Jer. 18. 6. *The heaven is his, and the heaven of heavens,* Deut. 10. 14. *the earth, and all the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein,* Psal. 24. 1. And being thus absolute, and universal a Proprietor, he places and alters, grants and resumes all things at his pleasure. And when he takes away, says *Job, who can hinder him, or say unto him, What dost thou?* Job 9. 12.

Quest. I see that all the good and evil, both of this World, and of the next, are in God's Hand, to allot as he sees fit. Doth he allot them according to any Rules, and in Recompence of Mens Predispositions: or Arbitrarily, out of Sovereign Will, according as he pleases?

Ans. In allotting the principal things, particularly the Eternal pains and pleasures of another life, and in general, all rewards and punishments, he has graciously bounded his own unlimited Power, by Laws and Compacts. But as for all good and evil things, which are not under Promises or Covenants, he dispenses them Arbitrarily, as he sees fit. And as those allotments of good and evil, which he makes in recompence to Men's Deeds, and according to the direction of his own Laws and Promises, may be called *Legal Distributions*, and *Covenant Justice*: so may those, wherein he has not limited himself by any such Contracts, be called the

Pre-

Prerogative Power, and Arbitrary Will of this Almighty Potentate.

Quest. In what things doth God act with us, out of his *Power of Prerogative*, allotting good or evil things, or states of life, according to his own unlimited Will and not according to Mens Qualities and Predispositions ?

Ans. I do not say he acts constantly so : but oft-time he doth.

1. In allotting Mens different state, and worldly circumstances : as that one should be born of Noble Parents, to great Fortunes, or honourable Employments with a well-shaped healthy Body, or pregnant parts and another should be born mean, or servile, or sickly or mis-shaped, or poor, or foolish. Thus, when the Jews asked the reason of a man's being born blind, whether for his parents sin, or his own ; our Saviour told them there was no need to seek out for such precedent defects either in him, or them, for that matter, but 'tis enough to say it was, *that the works of God might be made manifest in him*, John 9. 2, 3.

2. In allotting their different outward helps for Religion, and Spiritual opportunities ; as that one should be born of Christian Parents, trained up in an Orthodox Belief, and pure Worship, in the Eyes of good Examples, and under the care of skilful Pastors ; and that another should be deprived of some, or, perhaps, of all these. Thus, the difference, both in *Secular*, and *Ecclesiastical Privileges*, which God put between the Jews and Edomites, (*the elder serving the younger*, not being intended ; or verified of Jacob and Esau's Persons, Jacob rather serving Esau, than Esau him, Gen. 33. 3. but of their Posterities, of whom God expressly speaks it, when he first declared it to Rebekah, Gen. 25. 23. and to whom Malachy, from whom also S. Paul cites this passage, doth apply it, Mal. 1. 2, 3.) this difference, say the Apostle, was an allotment out of God's Sovereign Will and not out of their precedent defects ; God declaring that to Rebekah, while the children were yet unborn, and had neither done good nor ill, to prepare them for this discrimination, Rom. 9. 11, 12, 13. These different allotments, of National Privileges to Jews above Edomites and afterwards, as he * there notes, to Gentiles above Jews

* Ver. 23.

24, 25, 26,

30.

Jews, when the *Jews* were cast off, and the *Gentiles* were taken into the Church in their place, was no unrighteousness in God, who hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, Verse 14, 15.

Lastly, to name no more, when he offers what is sufficient to all, to enable them to do his will if they are not wanting to themselves, which renders all without excuse; yet allotting more eminent, and efficacious degrees of Grace to some Persons, and shewing more respect and forbearance towards some offenders, than he doth to others, whom he strikes with a swifter Vengeance, cutting them off, it may be, in their very first attempts. Thus his sparing *Pharaoh*, and still raising him up again to a new trial after numerous relapses, *S. Paul* ascribes to God's Sovereignty, who has mercy on whom he will have mercy, Rom. 9. 17, 18.

In allotting these different worldly Circumstances, and external Privileges and Opportunities, and more eminent degrees of inward Grace, and shewing this different forbearance, God uses the same Prerogative Power, and absolute Sovereignty over his Creatures, which he useth doth over the clay, as *S. Paul* says, forming one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour, not because of any different fineness of the matter, but, taking both out of the same lump, out of his own will and pleasure, Rom. 9. 21.

Quest. But in these allotments, where God dispenses Arbitrarily, doth he not always dispense Wisely, and Reasonably?

Ans. Yes, most certainly. Man's will is too oft a blind, precipitate resolution. But God's Will is never without Reason, and the highest Counsel directs him, where he seems most Arbitrary in acting. He works all things, according to the counsel of his own will, Eph. 1. 11. So that he is said to act out of Will, not as if he did not Will upon good Reason, but because that Reason is not his being directed so by any of his Laws or Covenants, or to recompence any pre-dispositions of his Creatures. 'Tis Arbitrary, because uncovenanted, and left to himself. But whatsoever is left to him, is sure to be managed with the highest Equity, Wisdom, and Goodness; as will appear to all, when

we shall be let in to behold the Counsel of God's
actings.

Quest. Doth God use this Prerogative-Power, in allot-
ting Saving Grace, so that one shall have the help of his
Spirit in a good way, and another shall be denied it, though
he seeks it earnestly and sincerely, only because God
pleases?

Ans. No, this is under Promises and Compacts, and
is to be dispensed and measured out to Men according
to their readiness to comply with it, and their care to
seek, and make use thereof. If any man lack wisdom, let
him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, Jamo 1. 5.
God will give the holy spirit to those who ask him, Luke 11.
13. and to every one that hath that is, improves his ta-
lents, shall be given, Matth. 25. 29. These are the Co-
venant-Rules, for allotting Saving Graces.

Quest. Or doth he use it in allotting Heaven and
Hell, and dispensing Eternal Rewards and Punish-
ments?

Ans. No, these are not given in way of Arbitrary
Dispensations, but of Legal Trials. At the last day,
men must all appear before Christ, to receive according to
what they have done in the body, whether it be good, or bad;
2 Cor. 5. 10. they must all be judged according to their
works, Rev. 20. 12, 13.

Quest. So that no Man who lives ill, must think that
God, to shew his Sovereignty, may save him if he will;
nor any Man, that lives well, fear lest God, to shew his
Sovereignty, may damn him if he will; nor if any Per-
son seriously sets himself to be good, must he harbour a-
ny jealousy of Prerogative-Power, and Arbitrary de-
crees against him, whereby he should be shut out
from that Grace, which is necessary to help him to
behol

Ans. No, there were not the least danger of that, had
we nothing else to trust to, but the absolute Holiness,
Justice, and Goodness, of the Divine Nature. But
moreover, in these most important disposals, God acts
not out of Arbitrary, unlimited Power, but as he has
made himself a Legal, Covenanted Governour, that is
graciously pleased to rule the World by Laws and Com-
pacts, and will distribute Rewards and Punishments ac-
cording

cording to them. So that in expecting any of these from him, we must not have recourse to any fancied secret Decrees, but only to revealed Promises, and Covenant-Declarations. And these, as I have shown, pronounce Mercy on the good, and Vengeance on the bad, and the Spirit and Grace of God, to all that sincerely and carefully seek after it. In relation to future Recompences, saith *S. John*, *God is just*, 1 John 1. 9. And in relation to present assistances, saith *S. Paul*, *God is faithful*, 1 Cor. 10. 13. And in relation to both, saith he again, *God is not unrighteous*, Heb. 6. 10. So making, not absolute Will and Prerogative-Arbitrariness, but Moral Honesty and Covenant-Justice, the ground of Mens Expectation from him in these matters.

Quest. You have several times mentioned the rectitude of God's Nature, as well as the voluntary addition of his Laws and Compacts, for the Limitation of his Sovereign Will and Power. And the Divine Nature you have particularly explained before: but I should be glad to have a brief account, of his Ways and Temper, from the *Holy Scripture*.

Ans. Thus they represent him. *That 'tis impossible for God to lye*, Heb. 6. 18. *that he is faithful, and cannot deny himself*, 2 Tim. 2. 13. *He is of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity*, Hab. 1. 13. *he hates all workers of it*, Psalm 5. 5. *He cannot be tempted with evil, nor tempt any man to it*, James 1. 13. *All his ways are judgment, a God of Truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he*, Deut. 32. 4. *He regardeth not persons, nor taketh rewards*, Deut. 10. 17. *He loveth righteousness, and beholdeth the upright*, Psalm 11. 7. *He is merciful, and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands*, Exod. 34. 6, 7. *God is love*, 1 John 4. 8, 16. And as he will by no means clear the guilty, Exod. 34. 7. so has he no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked man turn from his way, and live, Ezek. 33. 11. These are the Almighty Deities fixt and immutable Ways, and Principles, which he never thwarts, or contradicts, to shew absoluteness of Power and Willfulness.

Quest. If Almighty God is the Proprietor of all things, and can do what he pleases, he must be All-sufficient in himself, and need no accessions from any Body to his Happiness ?

Ans. So he is. My Goodness, saith David, extendeth not to thee, Psalm 16. 2. He needs nothing, that any Creatures can offer to him ; and if he did, he could supply himself with them, since all the World can present him with nothing, but what they have from him.

Quest. If we are so poor, that we can give, and he so full, that he can receive nothing ; 'tis plain he is no selfish Being, nor seeks any separate Interests of his own, by any services which we are to pay him.

Ans. Very true. His ends are only to communicate Happiness, not to gain it. And this may shew Men how unnecessary their scruple is, who fear they are not sincere in God's Service, if they seek thereby to benefit themselves. For in that, their end is not different from his, but the same with it. They seek his Glory, in pursuing their own truest good, for in giving, not in receiving it is, that he seeks to be glorified.

Quest. What must God's Sovereignty, and absolute Dominion teach us ?

Ans. First, since all we possess, is held under him, never to compass any worldly thing by Fraud, or Falshood, or any deceitful and dishonest dealing. For since God never allows of such, whosoever come into Possessions that way, have no consent, or grant from him. So that whatever they hold, it is not by any Title of Right and Lawful Claim, but only by unjust Usurpation.

Quest. What do we learn from this absolute Dominion besides ?

Ans. Secondly, to be content with that State and Condition ; and that portion of Goods and Accommodation, which God allots us. For be our part what it will, and other Mens never so much above it, as most are apt to fantasie all their own burthens heaviest, and their own enjoyments least : yet, God having

having as absolute Propriety to make one Rich, and another Poor, as the * *Potter* has, *out of the same lump*, *Jer. 18. 6. *to frame one vessel to honour, and another to dishonour*, Rom. 9. 21 they must needs be most rightfully disposed. Yea, moreover, whatever little any of us enjoy, in comparison with others, yet is that little wholly undeserved; and it from the same bounty, which grants us our share, any other Men have more, *our eye must not be evil, because God's is good*, Matth. 20. 15.

Quest. Must it teach us any thing else?

Ans. Yes, *Thirdly*, to be content when he resumes his own Allotments. For when he grants us things, he still keeps the Propriety in himself. He makes no *Tenants in Fee*, no, nor so much as *Tenants for Life*: Whatsoever outward things we hold under him, it is all as *Tenants at Will*, to be disseiz'd whensoever he pleases. And therefore whensoever God lends us Health, or Wealth, or Honour, or Friends, or Children, we must enjoy them with an apprehension of their being only Loans for a time, and with a readiness to resign them up, when called for again. As good *old Eli* did, who upon an irreparable degradation of his Family, from a State of highest Power and Dignity, to the greatest want and meanness, only said, *it is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. And as *Job*, who upon his sudden and amazing change of fortune, when from the most rich and happy, in a few minutes time he was made the most poor and miserable of all the Men in the *East*, said only, *the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21.

Quest. Must it teach us any thing more?

Ans. Yes, *Fourthly*, to use all his Allotments to his Honour, whilst he spares them to us. He makes no Proprietors, but only *Stewards*, 1 Pet. 4. 9, 10. And in *stewards* it is required, that they prove *faithful*, 1 Cor. 4. 2. employing what is under their charge, to their Master's ends, use, and interest. And therefore no Persons, to whom God has given *Estates*, must think them a privilege, for being idle, and careless; or for spending them wholly upon sports and

and pastimes, as if wealthy Persons were made for no other business, but diversions; and much less for laying them out in ostentation of Pride, and Vanity; or in ministering to Vice and Luxury. Health, and Wit, and Wealth, and other Temporal advantages, being only Loans of God, are to be faithfully stewarded, and laid out, not slothfully neglected, wasted, embezzelled, or abused.

Quest. Are we to learn from it any thing further?

Ans. Yes, *Fifthly*, to be humble, and think modestly and soberly of our selves, under any preeminence of Body, or Parts, Power or Possessions. When these Advantages puff Men up with pride, and vain fondness, and self-conceit, they arrogate all the fancied Honour and Estimation of them to themselves, as if they were Proprietors thereof. But when they own them as God's Gifts, and Trusts, and themselves as holding them only during Pleasure by uncertain Tenures, they will ascribe all the Honour of them to him, and learn Modesty, Care, Dependence, and Thankfulness. And withal, never insult, or deride the want of them in others: remembering, that he who *mocketh the poor*, (and the case is the same in all other Natural Defects, or Calamities,) *reproacheth his Maker*, who disposed of him in that condition, as *Solomon* says, *Prov. 17. 5.*

Quest. By this I see *God Almighty* is an immensely Great Being. How must the thoughts of such an irresistible Might, and absolute Sovereignty affect us?

Ans. With the greatest submission of Humility, and Reverence. For such immense Greatness and Majesty, should strike us with holy fear and submission in the highest degree, every time we think, or speak of this Great God, especially in all Acts of Adoration and Worship, which we pay to him. *Thou must fear this glorious, and fearful name, the Lord thy God, Deut. 28. 58. He is the excellency of Jacob, Amos 8. 7. the most high over all the earth, Psal. 83. 18. a great God, a mighty, and terrible, Deut. 10. 17. glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing won-*

wonders, *Exod. 15. 11. Holy, and reverend is his name, Psalm 111. 9.*

Quest. By this Almighty Power, 'tis easie to believe God made the World.

Ans. Yes, thereby in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, *Gen. 1. 1.* And by the same Power he still Governs and Preserves it, as I have before explained.

The End of the First Part.

And thus, in the beginning, God created the
heaven and the earth, in 1. And by the same
power, he still governs and preserves it, and
before creation.

The End of the First Part.

THE

THE
Practical Believer :
OR, THE
ARTICLES
OF THE
Apostles Creed,

Drawn out
To form a true Christians Heart
and Practice.

In Two Parts.

By *John Kettlewell*, Minister of *Coles-Hill* in
Warwickshire.

L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year, M DCC XII.

THE
Practical Believer:
OR THE
ARTICLES
OF THE
Apostles Creed

Drawn out
To form a true Christian's Heart
and Practice.

By John Kettwell.

By John Kettwell, Minister of Coker-Hill in
Kent.

LONDON:
Printed in the Year, M DCC XII.

THE
Practical Believer.

The Second Part.

OR, THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF
JESUS CHRIST.

By *John Kettlewell*, Minister of *Coles-Hill* in
Warwickshire.

L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year, M DCC XII.

THE
Practical Believer
OF THE
KNOWLEDGE
OF
JESUS CHRIST

By John Kitchin, Minister of Coler-Hill in
Warrington

LONDON:
Printed in the Year, M DCC XII

THE CONTENTS.

PART II.

Of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.

CHAP. I.

Of the Office, and Natures of Jesus Christ.

In what Salvation by Christ consists. Being Christ notes his being, 1. A Prophet, to teach his Church. We must hear and learn of him in the Holy Scriptures; and at the mouths of his Ministers. 2. A Priest, to Redeem, and Intercede for it. 3. A King, to Govern it by his Laws. And by his Officers, whom we are to submit to in his place. Also to protect it against all visible and invisible Enemies. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, as having receiv'd from the Father the Nature of God. And the Power of God. On both these Accounts, and others, he is our Lord. And to be worshipp'd. What we learn from his being our Lord. Of Christ's being Conceive'd of the Holy Ghost, and Born of a Virgin. He was truly Man. And why he was so.

CHAP.

C H A P. II.

Of the Sufferings of Christ.

An Account of what Christ suffer'd, and from whom. Both he, and God the Father were consenting to it. What he suffer'd, was for our sins, to save us from suffering for them, when we truly repent of them. Pardon on Repentance, the design of his Satisfaction, and the Merit of his Death. This is a free Grace, which implies that it is not given in Recompence of our Deserts, not that it requires no Conditions. An Account why God would not grant this Grace of Pardon to Penitents, without Christ's dying to satisfy for them. And how his Death serv'd all the designs of God's Justice, full as well, as their own would have done. Christ's Sacrifice but once offered, but daily commemorated. Several useful inferences from Christ's dying for us. Christ's dead Body was Buried. Of his descent into Hell.

C H A P. III.

Of the Resurrection of Christ, and his sitting at God's Right-hand.

An Account how Christ may be said to have been three days in the Earth. His Resurrection proved. The necessity of it. He ascended to Heaven. What is meant by his sitting at the Right-hand of God. There he, 1. Intercedes for us, as our Priest. This intercession not vocal, by words and formal Pleas, but by presenting himself, and his own meritorious Sacrifice. He intercedes only for Covenant-Mercies, and on Covenant-Terms. He is an Intercessor of absolute Power with God, and truest Affection for us. One part of his intercession, is to hand and present our Prayers to God. Therefore whensoever we pray for any thing, 'tis both our duty, and wisdom to apply by him. 2. Governs his Church, as a King. In what Acts this consists. 3. Instructs his Church, as a Prophet, by sending to it the Holy Ghost. Christ's Body having now taken

taken up its fixt abode at God's Right-hand, we are not in any Ordinances to expect his Bodily Presence, but only a Presence by his Spirit, which is more to be desired. Some Inferences from Christ's sitting at God's Right-hand.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Future Judgment

The necessity of the Future Judgment. All men are judged, and made happy or miserable, at their Deaths. But not so fully then, as they will be afterwards. The Compleat and General Judgment, is at the end of the World. In that, Jesus Christ is to be the Judge. Who are to be judged. In that Judgment no Condemnation, but for breaking God's Laws: So not for indifferent things. Men shall be tryed and sentenced for all their sinful Actions, with regard to their lasting Effects. For their most secret ones. And such ill deeds as were disguised under the fairest Pretences. For their sinful Omissions. And Neglecting to employ, and improve their Talents. For sinful Words. And Thoughts and Desires. For all these Men shall be judged impartially, without respect of Persons. But with Equity and Candor, not in Rigour. The Benign Judge will be very ready to observe what makes for us, and make the best of our Performances. And interpret the seemingly Rigorous Expressions of his own Laws, with great condescension to Humane Measures. He will allow for involuntary Failings. And judge Candidly and Favourably of that involuntariness. And for Natural Infirmities. And for Providential disadvantages, as Multiplicity of Business, greatness of Temptations, Bodily Indispositions. For Pitiabie Defects of Degrees in Duties. Great Latitude on the side of Bliss, and all not required to be of the same Size. He will Reward Good Things, tho' done with Difficulty and Reluctance, yea, when Pitiably stained with impure mixtures. Our Judge will shew all this Candor, and would have us expect it. In Recompening good Men, he will consider the Difficulties and Oppositions. And the hazard, and cost of their Services. And the hardships of Providence,

allot-

allotted to exercise good Men in this Life. Of the Condemnation of ill Men. The Fire, which is to torment them, shall burn up and dissolve the World. Practical Inferences from the last judgment.

CHAP. V.

Of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost is God. What he hath done for our Salvation. Of his extraordinary Gifts bestowed on Apostles and Evangelists, which were for the Planting, and Propagating Christ's Religion. 1. The gift of inspiration, in Revelations. This bestowed upon the Apostles. These Revelations they have fully set down in the Holy Scriptures, after which we are not to look for any others. This Gift, of knowing Religion by immediate Revelation, necessary only in Apostles, and Evangelists. And design'd for the Infancy of the Church. Other Rules, whereby to examine new Lights and Revelations in Religion. As try them by the Scriptures. Call for their Miracles, wherewith God still empower'd men, when he sent them to reveal new Things. No need of Miracles, when men pretend only to revive old, and acknowledged Revelations. If they shew Miracles, for things plainly against Scripture, they must work more, than were wrought to confirm the Scripture. An account of Joel, 2. 28, 29. Which seem to foretell the commonness of Revelations among Christians. The first Inspirations were not only in Doctrinal Points, but also in Devotions. And about Temporal matters, Subservient to this Gift of Revelations, was the Gift of discerning Spirits. This done afterwards by ordinary Rules. And the Gift of utterance and boldness. Their minds not influenced by this constantly, and at all Times. But ordinarily they were, and especially when they had most need of it. 2. Of the Gift of Miracles. Miracle a Proof of Divine Revelation. How discernible from Lying Wonders, by the Doctrines built on them. By their ends and usefulness, and being wrought on needful Occasions. Of the miraculous Gift of healing Diseases. This sometimes by anointing with Oil. And Prayers. Of casting out Devils, and other Miracles. Of delivering from Satan, what it was, and why so call'd. Of Jo

in Tribulations, and what was extraordinary in that of the Apostles. To the working these Miracles there was always required Faith in him that wrought them. And sometimes Faith in him that received them. 3. Of the Gift of Strange Tongues. The ends of this. And of the Gift of Interpreting such Strange Tongues. What is meant by the Holy Ghost being a Comforter. The Sin against the Holy Ghost, is a Sin against these extraordinary Gifts. Woy Blasphemy against him more irremissible, than against the Father or the Son. Extraordinary Gifts no mark of a justified State. Of Officers appointed by the Holy Ghost. Some of these Temporary, others to continue through all Times, the present Officers ordaining Successors of the Holy Ghost's ordinary Graces. By these we may know he dwells in us. Our care required towards these. Of Preventing Grace in outward advantages, and inward good motions. Directions how we are to endeavour after saving Graces, in six Particulars. How God gives them, though we are thus to acquire them. The Holy Ghost works also in us Spiritual Joys and Comforts. This he doth not in all the minds he sanctifies, because some are unfit for them through intrinsic impediments. But they are withheld from none, through his Arbitrary withdrawing, which some count Spiritual Desertion.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.

No assurance of Salvation by Christ, but in his Church. This Church Holy. And Catholick. Admission into it by Baptism; when regularly perform'd in any one, valid in all Churches. Excommunication is so too This Church is one Body by external visible unity. Of the Communion of Saints in this Church. Of their visible Union in Faith or Doctrine. And in Prayers and Devotion. Of communicating in Publick Prayers. A Sin to separate without just cause. Imposing Sins, or Errors, as Conditions of Communion is a just cause. Not Lawful to separate for Things indifferent. Nor for

better means of edification. Just to separate from a Church, that doth not impose her Corruptions, when her Errors in Faith overthrow the Foundation. That is, when she ceases to own the one true God. Or denies Jesus to be the Christ, or Salvation by his Merits and Mediation. Owning Jesus to be the Christ, implies, owning the Articles of the Apostles Creed, which contains all Fundamentals. Whilst any Churches hold to this Creed, which is the Foundation, Errors in other things do not unchurch them. But such Erroneous are in a worse state, than Orthodox Christians. Nor is her Communion to be deserted merely for such Errors, tho' very gross, if she doth not impose them. Just to separate from a Church of a corrupt Worship, when sinful things pollute her Publick Offices. Or when good Devotions are put up in a strange Language, not for Rites and Customs about indifferent matters. Nor just to separate for scandalous Members, where a Churches constitution is faultless. Nor tho' it neglect Discipline, which should reform them. Of keeping Fellowship with the Apostles, by submitting to our lawful Bishops their Successors. Christians to communicate in Affections, in Alms, and Temporal good Things.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Forgiveness of sins.

What Sin is. Of wilful sins. Of sins of Ignorance, Sur-reption, Passion. Forgiveness of sin is the Release of its Punishment, When Eternal Punishments are remitted, Present and Temporal are often exacted. *What is the Time of Relaxing these Punishments.* Remission of all Sins, but Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. And wilful Apostacy from Christianity. Wilful sins forgiven, when we Repent, and forgive others. Sins of Ignorance and inadvertence, upon our Charity to others. This forgiveness outwardly dispensed in Baptism. The Eucharist. And Sacerdotal Absolution. The Power of the Keys lies in Retaining as well as Absolving, which ought to beget a just dread of Excommunication. *What is meant by our Forgiving sins.* *What use we are to make of the Forgiveness of Sins.*

C H A P.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life
Everlasting.

The Resurrection not meerly of our Spirits from sin, but of our Bodies from the Grave. This to be brought about by the Almighty Power of God. The Perfections of Glorified Bodies, viz. Immortality, Spirituality, and Glory. The Bodies of the Wicked Immortal. And exquisitely sensible. Some Inferences from the Resurrection of our Bodies. Good Souls carried straight-way into a Place of Bliss. Of Eternal Life, wherein there is Full and unmixed Happiness. Of the satisfaction of their Senses. Their clear and distinct Knowledge. Perfect Holiness. And without Reluctance. Blissful Companions. Perfection of Love and Kindness. Honour, and Eminence of Place. All these to be enjoy'd in the Highest Heavens, without satiety, or weariness. For evermore. Of the miseries of the Damned, in Tormenting Passions. The worm of Conscience. Fire and Flames. Disgrace, Under all which, no favour of God. No company, but of Tormenting Devils, and damned Spirits. None to condole, when they cannot relieve. No rest and sleep, for Recruit of Spirits. No end of their miseries. The Use of this.

The Practical Believer.

P A R T II.

Of the Knowledge of Jesus Christ.

CHAP. I.

Of the Office, and Natures of Jesus Christ.

The Contents.

In what Salvation by Christ consists. Being Christ, notes his being, 1. A Prophet, to teach his Church. We must hear and learn of him in the Holy Scriptures; and at the mouths of his Ministers. 2. A Priest, to Redeem, and Intercede for it. 3. A King, to Govern it by his Laws. And by his Officers, whom we are to submit to in his place. Also to protect it against all visible and invisible Enemies. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, as having receiv'd from the Father the Nature of God. And the Power of God. On both these Accounts, and others, he is our Lord. And to be worshipped. What we learn from his being our Lord. Of Christ's being Conceived of the Holy Ghost, and Born of a Virgin. He was truly Man. And why he was so.

Quest. What is the *Second Article* of the *Creed*?

Ans. And in *Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord.*

Quest. *Jesus* signifies a Saviour, from what doth *Christ* save us?

Ans. From two things. 1. Our sins. 2. Those eternal Torments, which are the Punishment of them.

Quest. If he prove a Saviour to us, must he Reform us and save us from our sins?

Ans. Yes; for this is the main Reason, why that Name was given to him. *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People from their sins, Mat. 1. 21.*

Quest. Will he save none from the Punishment, but whom he saves from their sins first?

Ans. No; for except ye Repent, ye shall all perish, *Luke 13. 3.* and at last he will say, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity, Mat. 7. 23.*

Quest. But when once they are delivered from their sins, they may make sure of being freed by him from Eternal Death too?

Ans. Yes; for there is now no condemnation to them that are in *Christ Jesus*, who walk not after the *Flesh*, but after the *Spirit*, *Rom. 8. 1.*

Quest. *Christ*, signifies anointed among the *Greeks*, as *Messiah* doth among the *Hebrews*; *Messiah*, if interpreted, being the *Christ*, or anointed, as *St. Andrew* said, *John 1. 41.* But what mean you, when you call *Jesus* the *Messiah* or *Christ*, that is, the anointed?

Ans. His being invested with the Office of a *Prophet*, to teach his Church; of a *Priest*, to make Reconciliation, and intercede for it; and of a *King*, to Govern and Protect it.

Quest. Why do you call such Investiture, his Anointing?

Ans. Because anciently Investitures into these Offices, were according to the *Eastern Custom*, by pouring Oyl upon them: as in the case of the *Arch-Prophet Elisha*, *1 Kings 19. 16.* and *High-Priest, Aaron*, *Lev. 8. 12.* And in *Kings*, as the *Jewish Doctors* note, when they received not their Office and Authority by Succession, but by extraordinary Designation; as in the case of *King Saul*, *1 Sam. 9. 16. & 10. 1.* and *King David*,

1 Sam.

1 Sam. 16. 13. Answerable to which, *Messiah's* Designation to his Office, which was to include all these, is call'd his *being Anointed*, Isa. 61. 1, 2, 3.

Quest. Was *Christ* invested in these Offices, by pouring Oyl upon him?

Ans. No, but by pouring a nobler thing, the miraculous Powers and Gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, which install'd him, and answer'd to their anointing. God *anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost, and with Power*, Acts 10. 38.

Quest. Was *Christ* in the Office and Quality of a Prophet, to teach his Church?

Ans. Yes, he was a Teacher sent from God, John 3. 2. What he said, he spake not of himself, but as the Father gave him Commandment, so he spake, John 12. 49, 50, so that the People spoke a great truth, when they said. This is of a truth that Prophet, who was to come into the World, John 6. 14. Nay, he was not in the rank of an ordinary Prophet, but in a pitch of Eminence, far above all others. For he not only had a Prophetick Spirit resting always on him, which the best of them enjoy'd but on certain times and occasions; but he knew the will of God by Personal Acquaintance and immediate intuition, not barely at second hand, by the Message of an Angel, or by a Vision or a Dream, as they all did. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him, John 1. 18. And on this account, among others, of all Prophets and Interpreters of God's mind, he alone is call'd the Word; because, lying in God's Bosom, he had his mind without any thing intervening, as immediately, as a word expresses ones meaning.

Quest. What must this teach us?

Ans. Whensoever we would know the mind of God, to seek only unto him; and never to hearken to any other New Lights, or Enthusiastical Pretenders. In all times, both in the Apostles days, and ours, several Impostors, and false Prophets, have come with pretended Messages, to shew men the will of God, and the way to Happiness. But we are to give ear to none of these, this work of communicating God's mind to men, not being left at random, but peculiarly intrusted with Jesus Christ, that great Prophet of the Church, who is

especially constituted by God, and anointed for this purpose. *This is my beloved Son*, said God in the voice from the bright Cloud, *in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him*, Mat. 17. 5.

Quest. But how shall we do to learn of him, since now he is no more among us here on Earth, but is gone to Heaven?

Ans. Two ways he exercises his *Prophetick Office* to communicate the mind of God to us.

† Joh. 16. 13. 1. By the *Scriptures*. What God told him, he first by Personal Converse, and afterwards by † *his Spirit* leading them into all truth, told the *Apostles* and *Evangelists*: and they put it in writing, in the Book call'd the *Holy Scriptures*, to be preached and published to all others, thro' all times. So that when we hear them read, we must think we hear *Christ* our great *Prophet* speaking to us. And to be debarr'd, or debar our selves of the use of them, what is it, but to be debarr'd of this great *Prophet's* free Communication?

2. By his *Ministers*, whom he has left and appointed to declare God's mind to the People in his place. Thus the *Priests* were appointed among the *Jews*: *The Priests lips should preserve Knowledge, and the People should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts*, Mal. 2. 7. And so are the *Ministers of Christ*, among us *Christians*. Lo! I am with you, teaching them all things whatsoever I have commanded, and that always, even to the end of the World. That is, with you during your own lives, and the Pastors and Teachers your Successors, for ever after your deaths, Mat. 28. 20. So that if we would give ear to *Christ*, and own him for the *Prophet* of the Church, we must seek the mind of God from the *Holy Scriptures*, and from the mouths of our Bishops and Pastors, who are his established *Ministers*, to inculcate and explain those *Scriptures*.

Quest. Another Office you say he was design'd and anointed to, was the Office of a *Priest*. Wherein doth that consist?

Ans. In two things. 1. The payment of a Price, to make Reconciliation, and expiate mens sins with God. And 2. *Interceding* for ever after, that they should have the benefit and blessing of it. A *Prophet* is employ'd from

from God to men, to declare his will and pleasure to them. But a Priest is employ'd from men to God, ordain'd, as St. Paul says, *for men in things pertaining to God*, Heb. 5. 1. So that a Priest stands for the Church, to make Reconciliation, and intercede for it.

Quest. And did Christ act the part of a Priest for the Church, paying a Price to make Reconciliation with God, and in virtue of that to intercede for it?

Ans. Yes, he reconciled us to God, by dying in our stead. *We are reconciled to God, by the death of his Son*: Rom. 5. 10. And being now raised from the Dead, he is *entred into Heaven, where he ever lives to make intercession for us*, Heb. 7. 25.

Quest. Doth he intercede, that men may have this Reconciliation, whilst they go on in sin?

Ans. No, but only when they forsake it, and Repent, *that their sins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19. So that till they amend, they must never expect that he should move for them.

Quest. What doth the consideration of Christ's Priesthood teach us?

Ans. To hope for the Mercy of God for our sins, upon our true Repentance. *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for our sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. And having him our High-Priest, we may draw near with full assurance of Faith, if once our Hearts are sprinkled, and cleansed from an evil Conscience, Heb. 10. 21, 22. And in general, it teaches us, whensoever we want any Mercy or Favour from God, to apply to him by Jesus Christ, who is anointed to be the sole Intercessor, or Great Master of Requests, from whom he will receive our Prayers.

Quest. You said, *thirdly*, that Christ was invested with the Office of a King to his Church, what doth that imply?

Ans. Two things. 1. That he govern it by his Laws, and Officers, the Bishops and Pastors. 2. That he protect it from all visible and invisible Enemies, by his Spirit and Providence. And both these Parts of Regal Power, Christ exercises over his Church. *He is our Lord to command, the Head over all things to his Body, which is the Church*, Eph. 1. 22, 23. and sits now as

a Protector at God's Right-hand, till his Enemies be made his Foot-stool, Psal. 110. 1.

Quest. 'Tis plain he exerciseth his Kingly Power of Governing us, by his Laws, which are contain'd in the holy Scriptures. But doth he also govern his Church by his Officers, viz. the Bishops and Ministers, making them his Deputies here on Earth?

Ans. Yes, for they are called his Pastors, Eph. 4. 8, 11. which is the Scriptural word for Governours, to feed, and to rule, being used promiscuously in the holy Language. *That saith of Cyrus, he is my Shepherd; that is, my Deputy in Power, or Substitute in Government.* Isa. 44. 28. And God brought David to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance; that is, to Rule them: So he fed them according to the Integrity of his Heart, and guided them according to the skilfulness of his Hand. Psal. 78. 71, 72. His Ministers are his Substitutes in Government, whom we are to hearken to, and obey in his Place. *Know them that are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; 1 Thess. 5. 12, 13. and obey those that have the rule over you, for they watch for your Souls, Heb. 13. 17.*

Quest. What must this reach us?

Ans. To submit to our own Bishops and Ministers, acting for, and under him, as he would to Christ himself, if we would own him to be King over us. For they are his Deputies, to Rule the Church in his place. And whilst they act according to his Commission, he Decrees and Sentences, Binds and Looses, Speaks and Acts by them; as every Royal Prince doth by his Representatives and Ministers, in all Authoritative Acts, whereto they are commission'd by him, which, when done by them, have the same Authority and Force, as if performed by himself in Person. And therefore if we reject them in such cases, we shew that we will not have him to Reign over us. *He that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, Luk. 10. 16.* And accordingly St. Paul, both in binding and loosing, declares, he acted in the person of Christ, 2 Cor. 2. 10: and commends the Galatians, for receiving him as Christ Jesus, Gal. 4. 14.

Quest. And wherein must we shew this Submission?

Ans.

Ans. In uniting with them in Prayers, and Sacraments; they having the charge of ministring in his Worship and Service, and what he solemnly and openly receives in his Princely Dependencies, being from the Mouths and Mediation of his own Stewards and Officers. In hearkening to their Godly Admonitions, because he has left them to instruct, and rebuke Sinners. In meekly undergoing their deserved Censures, and seeking again the Peace of the Church by true Repentance. And, lastly, in cheerfully conforming to all their Church-Laws and Constitutions, when they do not thwart, or oppose his. *Christ* himself, our Sovereign Lord and King, has given Laws for all necessary things; but has left them to regulate Rites and Ceremonies, which are variable matters, and to take care of the Order and Decency of Worship, in the publick Assemblies. *Let every thing be done decently, and in order in the Church,* 1 Cor. 14. 40. is a precept given to Church-Governours, for they have the care of God's Publick Service. And when they make any innocent, or useful Appointments in these things, we must cheerfully obey and conform our selves. *Obey them that have the Rule or Guidance over you, for they watch for your Souls,* Heb. 13. 17.

Quest. Is it another part of his Kingly Power to protect his Church from all visible and invisible Enemies?

Ans. Yes, he guards it against all inward, and invisible Enemies, by his *Spirit*; and from all outward, and visible Enemies, by his *Providence*. But the security he gives against these, is not that it shall never be eclipsed and persecuted, but only that it shall never be destroyed by them. The Promise is, *That the Gates of Hell, that is, the Powers of Satan, and all his wicked instruments, shall not prevail against the Church,* Matt. 16. 18.

Quest. What must *Christ's* protecting his Church teach us?

Ans. To trust him with Religion, and not sin to save it in the most perillous times. He is more concern'd for his Church, than any of us are, or can be; and he knows how to protect it, without the help of our sins, or our acting wickedly for it. So that in all such times,
we

we are to practise Religion, and do our duty ; and then recommend, and trust the Preservation of it to his care.

Quest. If we would own *Christ* as our King, then, I perceive, we must obey his Laws and Ministers, and commit our selves to him in well-doing, as the Protector of his Church ?

Ans. Yes.

Quest. And will none partake of the Reconciliation of his Priesthood, but they who thus believe him as their Prophet, and obey him as their Lord ?

Ans. No, for Faith and Obedience are necessary to our Peace with God ; and there is no enjoying the benefit of one, without embracing him in all his Offices.

Quest. To believe in *Christ*, then, or to acknowledge *Jesus* to be the *Christ*, is to own him for the Prophet of the Church, by hearkning to his Word and Ministers ; for the Priest of God, by hoping in him, and applying to God by him, for Reconciliation, and all other mercies ; and for the King of his Church, by obeying both his Laws and Officers, and in a course of well-doing, trusting both our selves and our Religion, to his Protection here on Earth.

Ans. Yes.

Quest. What is meant by that, which follows in the Creed, his being *God's only Son* ?

Ans. One meaning is, in respect of his *Nature*, that God begat him, as a Father doth a Son, of like nature with himself, so that he is God as well as Man. For *he is equal with God*, Phil. 2. 6. *The true God*, 1 Joh. 5. 20. and *over all, God blessed for ever*, Rom 9. 5. Which last was the special Character and Title of the true God, in the common stile and expression of the *Jews*. Who, from their Custom, when the Priest in the Sanctuary rehearsed the Name of God, of answering, *Blessed be his name for ever*, came in their common speech to call him, *The Blessed One* ; by which phrale, the Scriptures often denote him, as in *Mar. 14. 61. 2 Cor. 11. 31. Rom. 1. 25.* And, agreeable to his having this Divine Nature, we find the Divine Works, as † *Creating*, and * *Sustaining* ; and Divine Honours, as † *Worship*, † *Mat. 28.* and * *Prayers*, and † *Baptism in the name of the Son*,

† *Jo. 1. 3.*

* *Heb. 1. 3.*

† *Heb. 1. 6.*

* *1 Cor. 1.*

2.

† *Mat. 28.*

.61

as well as of the *Father*, ascribed to him in Holy Scripture.

Quest. Why was it requisite our Redeemer should be God ?

Ans. 1. To give Merit to his Sacrifice, which was infinitely advanced, in regard his Blood was *the Blood of God*, Act. 20. 28. *How much more shall the Blood of Christ purge your Consciences, who offered himself thro' the eternal Spirit*, Heb. 9. 14. As its being committed against God, was the extreme aggravation of our sin : So must its being performed by God, be equally an enhancement of his Reparation. 2. To several other purposes, as to his having Power enough to conquer Death and Hell, and save us from all our Spiritual Enemies. To fit him for a capable and competent Judge of all men, seeing into their Hearts and Thoughts, which is one of God's Prerogatives. To recommend Vertue as much was possible by an example, since in him it appears, that all the things required of us, are worthy of the most excellent Natures ; yea, are not below the practice of God himself.

Quest. What other meaning is there of it ?

Ans. Another is in respect of his *Power*, because he is invested with all the Authority and Power of God. For *Son of God*, signifies, sometimes the same as *the Christ* ; that is one whom God hath commissioned to act in his stead. *He shall be great, and the Son of the Highest, and God shall give him the Throne of his Father David*, Luk. 1. 32. And thus *Jesus Christ* is God's Son ; for *he hath given him all Power, both in Heaven and Earth*, Matt. 28. 18. and committed all Authority to the Son, that all should honour the Son, as they honour the Father, Joh. 5. 22, 23.

Quest. And being *the Son of God* in this sense ; that is, having Sovereign Power from him, he is our Lord ?

Ans. Yes, in respect of this derived Power, and of his own Sovereign Divine Nature, of his invaluable Merit and Purchase, and of our voluntary Compacts and Submissions : on all accounts, that can found a just Dominion, and Lordship over us. *God has given him a Name above every Name, that every Tongue should confess, Jesus Christ is Lord*, Phil. 2. 9, 11. *To us there is one Lord*, 1 Cor. 8. 6.

Quest.

Quest. And being God, not only in Power, but also in Nature, must we not all worship him, and pray to him, and trust in him as God ?

Ans. Yes, for at the name of Jesus every Knee shall bow, Phil. 2. 10. and all must honour the Son, as they honour the Father, Joh. 5. 23. This is done by all good Christians, and Saints on Earth, who are styled, They that call upon the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 1. 2. And also by those, who are glorified in Heaven, who sing their Hallelujah's, as to God the Father, so also to the Lamb, Rev. 5. 11, 12, 13, 14. Yea, by the Angels too, for when he bringeth his first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the Angels of God worship him, Heb. 1. 6. And this Divine Honour, if he were not a God in Nature, as well as in Power, he could neither claim, nor receive from them.

Quest. If Christ is our Rightful, Sovereign Lord, then we must give up our Wills to his, and perform faithfully whatsoever he orders ?

Ans. Yes, Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say ? Luke 6. 46. Nay, since he is our Lord, and we are his Household-Servants, we must not, as he says, be the servants of Men ; that is, so wholly given up to their Service, as that we cannot mind his ; or serve their pleasure, when it interferes with his Laws ; or comply with their Mien and Customs, when they are contrary unto his ; or soothe and flatter their weak Minds, and feed their sickly Humours, like timorous or mercenary Slaves. No man, says our Saviour, can thus serve two Masters, Matth. 6. 24. Ye are bought with a price, saith St. Paul, be not ye therefore the Servants of men, 1 Cor. 7. 23. And if I yet pleased or soothed up men, I should not be the Servant of Christ, Gal. 1. 10.

Quest. Since he is our Lord, we should not think any thing too mean, or ill for us, which he thought not for him, but compose our selves to his Behaviour, willingly following where he has gone before ; it being a shame for a Servant to be more nice and delicate, and more hard to please, than his Master ?

Ans. Very right. And accordingly he presses us on to those Duties, which otherwise we should be most like to disdain and grumble at, by putting us in mind,

how

how he has done, or undergone the same himself. If I, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet, Joh. 13. 14. If Men give you hard names, be content, they have done the same to me; and the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord; 'tis enough for the Disciple, that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord, Mat. 10. 24, 25. He that would be greatest amongst you, saith he again, let him minister most, and strive to be most useful, as he that serveth; for I am among you as he that serveth, Luke 22. 26, 27. Be patient, when you are persecuted, remembring what I said unto you, that the Servant is not greater than his Lord, Joh. 15. 20. Thus must we spurn at no condescensions, or labours of Love and Service: no, nor at Reproaches for well-doing, or suffering in God's Cause; since thereby we only wear our Lord's Livery, nay, are made like to him, and follow his steps, where he has led the way before us.

Quest. Since he is the common Lord, both of Masters and Servants, must not this teach us great Moderation and Equiry towards our Servants and Dependants, who, however inferior and subject they may be in Humane Respects, are yet equally near to him, and Brethren and Fellow-servants in respect of his Dominion?

Ans. Yes. God would not permit the Jews, to make any of their Brethren Slaves, tho' they might use them as Fellow-Servants, because they were all his Servants. They are my Servants, which I brought forth out of the Land of Egypt, they shall not be sold as Bondmen, Lev. 25. 42. And give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, saith St. Paul, knowing, that ye also have a Master in Heaven, Col. 4. 1.

Quest. What is the third Article of the Creed?

Ans. Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

Quest. Why must Christ, out of the Natural Course of Generation, be born of a Virgin? And why must the Holy Ghost beget him?

Ans. Because he was to be undefiled from the Womb, and fit to satisfy for the sins of others, having none of his own. For such an High-Priest became us, as was Holy, Undefiled, separate from Sinners, Heb. 7. 26.

Quest.

Quest. Was Christ truly Man ?

Ans. Yes, he underwent all the wants of our Natures, for he was hungry, weary, and sleepy, as we are. And all the Infirmities, for he wept, and was sorrowful, troubled, and sore amazed ; *He was in all points tempted as we are, only without sin,* Heb. 4. 15.

Quest. Having felt them thus in himself, will he not be apt to sympathize, and have compassion on all our weaknesses ?

Ans. Yes, thereupon the *Apostle* argues him to be soon touched with the feeling of our infirmities, Heb. 4. 15.

Quest. Why was it requisite, that to redeem us, the Son of God should become Man ?

Ans. To fit him, 1. To atone and appease God, that Man might gain what Man had lost, and that by his performing Obedience, he might be capable to restore what Disobedience had forfeited. *As by one man's Disobedience many were made Sinners, so by the Obedience of one, were many to be made Righteous,* Rom. 5. 19. And we having Flesh and Blood, he also took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil, Heb. 2. 14.

2. To be Gentle and Compassionate towards us, affectionately interceding for us, and reasonably bearing with our infirmities. *It behoved him in all things to be like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful, and faithful High-Priest,* Heb. 2. 17.

Quest. How was his becoming Man, necessary to give him a knowledge and compassionate sense of our infirmities ? Was he not God before ? And doth not God, who made our Frame, know our infirmities better, than we who feel them ?

Ans. Yes, he doth. But on other accounts, as the appeasing God, because not God, but only Man could suffer, and satisfy ; and Man's Obedience was fittest to regain what Man's Disobedience had lost ; and it would be most easie, and favourable to us, that he, who should give Laws to us, and judge us at the last, should be a Man like our selves ; it was requisite the Mediator should be Man. And when he was so, to make not only his Divinity, that made our Frame, but his Humane Nature too, in which he transacts with us, compassionate

to the utmost of our infirmities, 'twas requisite he should feel them in himself; since there is no way to make Men so sensible of any infirmities, as their feeling them by sorrowful experience.

Quest. What must we learn from this Condescension of the Son of God?

Ans. To be humble, and not contemn the poorest and meanest state, since he has dignified it with his Appearance in it. To be Charitable, and Condescensive, and think nothing below us, whereby we may do good. To be content in any state, which God allots for us, thinking the greatest measure of his Love and Tenderneſs, consistent with the greatest meanness of our outward state and circumstances, as it plainly was in his Son's case. Lastly, To think all wickedneſs, utterly unworthy of our Nature, since now God has so marvellously united it to his own. These, and such like things, we must learn and practise from it, if we would be his followers, and shew the same mind to be in us, which was before in Christ Jesus, Phil. 2. 3, 4, 5.

Quest. Why must he be both God and Man, in one Person?

Ans. To fit him for the Office of a Mediator, and Reconciler: who was to go between them, and make them both one: For it was fit he should be nearly allied to each Parry, and have interest in both of them.

C H A P. II.

Of the Sufferings of Christ.

The Contents.

An Account of what Christ suffer'd, and from whom. Both he, and God the Father were consenting to it. What he suffer'd, was for our sins, to save us from suffering for them, when we truly repent of them. Pardon on Repentance, the design of his Satisfaction, and the Merit of his Death. This is a free Grace, which implies that it is not given in Recompence of our Deserts, not that it requires no Conditions. An Account why God would not grant this Grace of Pardon to Penitents, without Christ's dying to satisfy for them. And how his Death serv'd all the designs of God's Justice, full as well, as their own would have done. Christ's Sacrifice but once offered, but daily commemorated. Several useful inferences from Christ's dying for us. Christ's dead Body was Buried. Of his descent into Hell.

Question. WHAT is the Fourth Article in the Creed?

Answer. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into Hell.

Quest. What did Christ suffer?

Ans. Besides his previous Sufferings, particularly in the Garden, where the wrath of God was strongly represented, and Hell let loose upon him, under which 'tis said, he was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, Mar. 26. 37, 38. and thrown into an Agony, wherein he sweat great drops of Blood, Luke 22. 44. Besides these previous Sufferings, I say, he suffered also after his Apprehension all manner of rudeness from the enraged Rabble and Soldiery, who mock-
ed

ed him, † spit upon him, buffeted, and scourged him; † Mat. 27. bound his Head about with a * wreath of sharp Thorns, 26, 30, 31. which every where like Darts pierced his tender flesh; * Ver. 29. and at last, nail'd his Hands and Feet to a Cross, a most acute and lingring Death: and to make that most ignominious Suffering more ignominious still, hung him in the midst between † two Thieves. † Luk. 23.

Quest. Who were the Executioners of all these Cruelties?

Ans. The Jewish Rulers and People went as far in it as they could. But because the Romans, who had conquer'd them, had not left among them, as they say, any Power and Authority to put any Man to death, Joh. 18. 31. they drew in Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governour, to sentence his Crucifixion, against his Conscience.

Quest. Did not Pilate believe Christ to deserve all this?

Ans. No; he knew they had delivered him for envy, and malice, Matt. 27. 18. He declared he was a just person, Matt. 27. 24. and that upon examination, he found no fault at all in him, Luke 23. 4, 14. No, nor yet Herod, when he sent him to be judged by him, v. 15. But because by their importunity a tumult was made, he yielded to pass sentence against him for his own quiet, Matt. 27. 24. and to content the people, whom he durst not offend, Mar. 15. 15. Luke 23. 23, 24.

Quest. What need had he to fear them, that such an abject fear should betray him into so unjust, and vile an Action?

Ans. He had incensed them, and made himself obnoxious to be artickled against, by his former violences, being a Man very Cruel and Tyrannical, for which, on the complaint of the Samaritan Jews, he was presently after removed, as † Josephus reports. And in this case, † Antiqu. they terrified him moreover, by threatening to accuse l. 18. 5. him to his jealous Governour, Tiberius Cæsar, as no friend to him, for letting Christ go, who called himself a King, which, they said, was speaking against Cæsar, Joh. 19. 12.

Quest. Christ did testify, indeed, before Pilate, that he was a King, and that for this end he came into the World, that he should bear witness of this Truth, Joh. 18. 37:

And did not this give *Cesar* just cause to be afraid of him?

Ans. No, because, as he declared, *his Kingdom was not of this World* neither should his Servants fight for him, as the Subjects of worldly Princes do for them, *Joh. 18. 36.* so that he would take nothing from the Emperor, nor pretend to thwart him, or resist his just Power. But his Kingdom was in relation to another World, a Spiritual Kingdom, set up in Men's Hearts, and administered by the expectation of future Rewards and Punishments, leaving Princes still to govern as they did in all the Affairs of this life. And this did not intrench any thing upon the Prerogatives of the present Powers, whom he left all in the same Authority, and their Subjects under the same Duty, as he found them. As *Pilate* plainly perceiv'd by *Christ's* Answer, where-with he was satisfied, and pronounced him innocent upon it.

Quest. These Sufferings of *Christ* which you mention, were most barbarous and horrible things. But amidst all these bodily Tortures, had he not ease within, and great support of inward spiritual Comforts; as he afforded the *Martyrs* and *Confessors* afterwards in theirs?

Ans. No, the Horrors of his Mind were beyond the Anguish of his Body, as if he were design'd to suffer the extremity of what Nature could bear. *His Soul was troubled, Joh. 12. 27. very heavy, Mat. 26. 37. Sore amazed, Mark 14. 33. Exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, Mat. 26. 38.* And in such an *Agony*, as I noted, at the apprehension of the Divine Wrath which he was conflicting with, as put a most unwonted force upon Nature, and made him sweat as it were great drops of Blood, *Luke 22. 44.* Under all which, he was so overborn with the Burden, that he needed an *Angel* to be sent to strengthen him, v. 43.

Quest. Could *Christ* have avoided these Sufferings, if he would?

Ans. Yes. he could have had *Legions of Angels* for his Rescue, *Matt. 26. 53.* But for our sakes, he voluntarily submitted to them. *I have power to lay down my life, and to take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of my self, Joh. 10. 18.*

Quest.

Quest. And was God consenting to them ?

Ans. Yes, they came about, not only by his Permission, but by his Counsel and Determination. He did no ways excite the *Jews* to this abominable Act ; but left them to their own envy and malice, which were more than enough to push them forward. But when they of them selves were wicked enough to do it, he, by his infinite Wisdom, accomplishes what his Son and he had before agreed, *viz.* the working our Redemption thereby. He suffered according to what was determined, *Luk. 22. 22.* He was delivered to them, by the determinate Counsel and Foreknowledge of God, *Acts 2. 23.* Herod and Pontius Pilate did only what his Hand, and Counsel had determined before to be done, *Acts 4. 28.* And he was a Lamb fore-ordain'd to be slain, before the foundation of the World, *1 Pet. 1. 20.* His death, and his exaltation therefore to be a Mediatary King, and our Redeemer, was a Bargain driven, and a Matter concerted long before, betwixt him, and his heavenly Father. My Father hath appointed, (the word is † covenanted) to me a Kingdom, that is in the everlasting agreement between God and him, it was promised as the Reward of his undertaking, *Luk. 22. 29.* And on this account, his Servants are said to be given to him as a Retribution : He gave himself for them ; that is to purchase them, *Tit. 2. 14.* Thine they were, says he to his Father, and thou gavest them me ; that is, on this consideration, *Joh. 17. 4. 6.*

Quest. But since the things he endured, were the absolute perfection of shame and sorrow, why should Christ submit, or God bring Christ to that end ? was it to punish his own sins ?

Ans. No, he did no sin, *1 Pet. 2. 22.* He was tempted in all points of Natural Infirmities as we are, but yet without sin, *Heb. 4. 15.*

Quest. For whose sins was it then ; for all death is the wages of sin, *Rom. 6. 23.*

Ans. For ours, for we had sinned, and were all to die ; but he comes by the Allowance of God, and bears our iniquity, by dying in our place. God laid on him the iniquities of us all, *Isa. 53. 6.* He tasted death for every man, *Heb. 2. 9.* He died for our sins, *1 Cor. 15. 3.* He poured out his Soul a Sin-Offering, *Isa. 53. 5, 10.*

Quest. What are we the better for his dying for them?

Ans. Infinitely the better every way; but particularly, his death will save us from dying for them, if we truly repent of them. He hath redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, by being made a Curse, that is, enduring a cursed death, for us, Gal. 3. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 21. He bought us off from death by dying for us, whence he is called our Redeemer, and our Ransom, 1 Tim. 2. 6.

Quest. But has not his death bought us off from the Punishment of our Sins, till we repent of them?

Ans. No, for we must Repent, and be converted, that our sins may be blotted out for his sake, Acts 3. 19. and being made perfect; that is, inaugurated into his Princely Power, by suffering, He became the Author of Eternal Salvation to all them that obey him, Heb. 5. 9.

Quest. If men remain impenitent then, they must die for their own sins, I perceive, notwithstanding?

Ans. Yes, Except they repent, they must all perish, Luk. 13. 3.

Quest. But since Christ hath died for them once already, will not that be dying twice, and so being twice punished for the same sin?

Ans. No, for he profered, and God accepted his death, not as an unlimited exchange for all Sinners, but only for those, who will leave their sins, and repent of them. He died, indeed, for all men: but he died as their Sacrifice, Eph. 5. 2. and Sacrifices were accepted in lieu only of Penitent Offenders; and as God still told the Jews, would never put away sins, without the Repentance of those whom they were offered for. To what purpose is the number of your Sacrifices? said he to those who went on still in their wickedness, Isa. 1. 11. The Sacrifice of God is a broken Spirit; that is, the Sacrifice which God accepts must be accompanied with it; a broken, and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise, Psal. 51. 17.

Quest. But was not his death a satisfaction for sins? And if he has satisfied for them already, what need we do more? must we satisfy for them again?

Ans. All the fruit, and estimate of his Satisfaction, must be taken from the Agreement between God and him. His death, who was an innocent man, would have

have signified nothing at all towards our release, unless God had been graciously pleased to admit of him in commutation, and exchange for our Suffering. It avails, and operates nothing by it self alone, but only so far, as God accepted him. And the nature and effect of his Satisfaction, as it was jointly designed and concerted between his Father and him, was not, that no sinner whatsoever should be accountable for his own sins, but only that none should, who had repented of them.

Quest. What then were his merits, or that which he deserved, and obtained of God for us, by his death?

Ans. The *Grace and Favour of Repentance*, or, that if we truly repent, we shall not die for our selves. So *St. Peter* expresses that benefit, which the *Gentiles* had received, in being admitted Christians: *then hath God also to the Gentiles granted Repentance unto Life*, Acts 11. 18. And again, *God exalted him to be a Saviour, to give Repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins*, Acts 5. 31. So that the merit of *Christ's* death, is the Pardon of all our sins on true Repentance, and likewise the *Grace* to enable us thus to repent of them.

Quest. Is this Pardon on Repentance, a *Grace and Favour*, which we needed him to purchase for us?

Ans. Yes, for the Law of Works, which condemned us all, was, *Do this, and live*; nor, as thro' *Christ* the Gospel is, *either do it, or repent where you fail*. So that God was not bound to pardon Sinners, when they did repent. Nay, the Honour of his Holiness and Justice, the maintaining the Authority of his Laws, and the seriousness and veracity of his threatnings, were ready to interpose, and hinder him from doing it. But when *Christ* came to die in our stead, and pay his own Blood as a price to induce God to pardon Penitents: Then, since he doth it not without such a valuable Recompence, he might pardon them, without any Reflection on those glorious Attributes. And this is the fruit of his Satisfaction, and the Merit and Purchase of his Death, viz. the *Favour of Pardon of sin upon Repentance*.

Quest. Is there no other Merit, and Fruit of *Christ's* Death?

Ans. Yes, besides the forgiveness of sin, and the gift of Eternal Life thereupon, he has also merited, as I said, the Grace to cure it. But this is so much favour and indulgence, as he ever sought, or has procured of God, towards the pardon of it.

Quest. But if we cannot partake of the benefit of his death, but upon these terms, how is all the favour we receive by it, said to come *freely*, and to be of *free Grace*?

Ans. Grace may be called *Free*, on two accounts; either, as it is not given us *for our deserts*; or, as it is not given *upon any conditions*.

Quest. Is the Grace of God free, in the *first* sense, as that excludes all *Merits*, or so free, as not to be given us for our deserts?

Ans. Yes, and this is the *Scripture-sense* of *Free-Grace*; for there *Free-Grace* is the same as *Undeserved-Grace*.

Quest. How doth that appear?

Ans. Because *Free-Grace* is there opposed to *Boasting*, which has place only on the Plea of Merit or desert. *We are justified freely by his Grace, then where is Boasting? it is thereby excluded*, Rom. 3. 24, 27. And by *Grace ye are saved, not of works*, i. e. by the desert of any works, *lest any man should boast*, Eph. 2. 8, 9.

Quest. If the *Scripture* had been silent, 'tis easie to apprehend this Grace must needs be undeserved by us, because all we can do, is by the help of his Spirit, and is but his just due, which we do not give, but pay as Debtors; and were it our own, it is yet defective and mean, and utterly unworthy of so vast a Recompence. But tho' it be thus absolutely undeserved by us, yet has not *Christ* fully merited and deserved it for us?

Ans. Yes, he was bound to nothing, but voluntarily subjected himself to the Law, and took our Nature upon him. All the perfect obedience which he shewed, either in doing or suffering the Will of God, was his free and gratuitous Offering; and was good in the highest degree and perfection; and received an infinite estimate, from the Divinity of his Person; and gratified the Father, in his greatest designs, for his own Glory, and mens Salvation. So that by his Services, so free and gratuitous in themselves, and so worthy of the

the most infinite Recompence, he has justly merited all that Grace, which, for his sake, God bestows on us.

Quest. The Grace of the Gospel, I see is absolutely free to us in the *first* sense; that is, it comes to us without the least of *our deserts*. But is it also free in the *second*, so as not to require in us any *Terms* or *Conditions*?

Ans. No, for the main instances of God's Grace; that is, of his gratuitous, and undeserved Gifts, are the *forgiveness of sins*, the *saving assistances of his Spirit*, and *Eternal Life*: And all these are given, tho' not for any of our Deserts, yet upon Conditions.

Quest. Is *forgiveness of sins*, one instance of God's Free Grace?

Ans. Yes, *we are justified*, that is, acquitted in judgment, or have our sins pardon'd, *freely by his Grace*, Rom. 3. 24. and *we have forgiveness*, according to the riches of his Grace, Eph. 1. 7.

Quest. And this Grace of Forgiveness, you say, is granted to us on Conditions?

Ans. Yes, on Condition of our *true Repentance*. For we are to *Repent*, that our sins may be blotted out, Act. 3. 19. And Christ was exalted to be a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of sins, Act. 5. 31. And when he sends out his Apostles to publish this Grace, he orders them to *preach Repentance, and Remission of sins in his Name, to all Nations*, Luk. 24. 47.

Quest. The *saving Assistance of God's holy Spirit*, is another eminent instance of Grace, and is most commonly called so in common speech; but is that given too upon Conditions?

Ans. Yes, on condition of our own care, and concurrent endeavours. For tho' the first motions and suggestions of the Spirit, which make the first step in our Conversion, may prevent our endeavours: yet the continuance of them on our Hearts, and their encrease to a saving pitch, that will govern our Lives and guard us against Temptations, depends upon our own Concurrency. *To him that bath*; that is, improves what God bestows, *shall more be given*: but *from him that bath not*, i. e. doth not profit with it, as the wicked Servant did not, *who went, and hid his Talent, shall be taken away*.

away even what he hath, Mat. 23. 25, 29. And when St. Paul tells us, God works in us both to will and to do; he tells us withal, that we must be Fellow-workers, and work out our own Salvation, Phil. 2. 12, 13.

Quest. Is Eternal Life another instance of Free-Grace?

Ans. Yes, it is an instance of it, and the Crown, and consummation of all the rest. It is called the Gift of God, Rom. 6. 23. and the Free Gift of God, Rom. 5. 15, 16, 18.

Quest. And is it also bestow'd upon Conditions?

Ans. Yes, upon condition of our Obedience to the Laws of God. Being made perfect thro' Suffering, Christ became the Author of Eternal Salvation, to those that obey him, Heb. 5. 9. And blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, Rev. 22. 14.

Quest. The Grace which we have by the death of Christ then is free, as you say, only as that excludes all our Deserts, but not as it excludes all Terms and Conditions.

Ans. Very right. And this is plain by that way wherein God makes over all that Grace to us, which is by the New Covenant. For what is given by way of Covenant, is given upon Terms; because Covenants differ from absolute Grants, and imply Articles on both sides. And thus the Benefits of the Gospel are given to us. For Christ's sake, we shall receive Remission of sins, the Assistance of the Spirit, and Eternal Life, tho' we never deserved them: but we shall not receive them, unless we Repent, and obey in order to them.

Quest. By this I perceive, that the Grace of Christ is no encouragement to sin, or slothfulness, and that his dying for our sins, will not save us from dying for them our selves, unless we repent of them?

Ans. Undoubtedly it will not.

Quest. But as soon as ever we repent, we may believe, and trust, that we shall be saved by it?

Ans. Yes; and this is the true Faith in his Blood, that is, a Faith that our Life shall be spared, and we reconciled to God, for the sake of it. God hath set forth Christ a Propitiation, for the Remission of sins that

are

are pass'd, thro' Faith in his Blood, Rom. 3. 23. But this Faith belongs not to any, whilst they continue in sin, and are wicked men, but only when they begin to obey, and serve him.

Quest. From what you have said, it appears, that Christ's great aim in dying for us, was to reclaim us from our sins, and make us holy and good men: and that he purchased Reconciliation, and the favour of God, only to shew us that it would not be in vain, and to encourage us to become so.

Ans. Yes, so it was. For he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, Tit. 2. 14. And he bare our sins in his own Body upon the Tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, 1 Pet. 2. 24.

Quest. You say Christ died to atone, and satisfy for sins, that God might pardon us when we repent of them. But why did he not think Repentance enough without a Ransom? Why would he not pardon Penitents unless Christ would die to make satisfaction for them?

Ans. Because the requiring such a satisfaction, shew'd his perfect hatred of sin, which is for the Honour of his Holiness; and the strict care of his Laws, which maintains the Reputation of his Justice; and took off all hope of impunity, if men shall go on still to transgress, and so was the greatest discouragement to future offences. All which would have been otherwise, had he been easie in forgiving, and admitted of a Reconciliation without a Ransom.

Quest. How doth the requiring such a satisfaction, shew his perfect hatred of sin, for the Honour of his Holiness?

Ans. Because he would not remit the Punishment of it, but upon the highest Ransom; and because when he undertook to answer for it, he would not spare it in his own Son, so that his hatred to it could not be overcome even by his love to him. Nay, moreover, because when, in consideration of his infinite Merits, and their Repentance, he returns into favour with them; yet to shew his absolute detestation of their former sins, he will not receive even the Prayers and Devotions of Peni-

Penitent Sinners at their own Hands, or treat with them in person, but requires a *Mediator* to offer up, and transact all for them. And withal, admitting no other either in Heaven or Earth, for that *Advocate*, but only his own eternal, and most dearly beloved Son: To shew, that when they offered the greatest Consideration, yet, in indignation at their former Provocations, he would have no dealings with them by any person, less great, and dear than him.

Quest. How doth it shew his *strict care of his Laws*, for the Honour of his Justice?

Ans. Because he would not dispense with the threatenings of those Laws, where he had no less a Reason, than the Salvation of all men, the greatest and most considerable part of the visible Creation, without a valuable recompence.

Quest. How doth it cut off all hopes of impunity, and utterly discourage all future offenders?

Ans. Because God has no more Sons to die for us, and when he was solicited to remit the punishment of our sins, he would not do it upon a less exchange. When man sinn'd against the Law of unerring Obedience, upon the Merits and Death of his Son, God pardon'd that, and admitted them to favour again upon their Repentance. But if they shall offend against this Law too, and be finally impenitent, there are no Sons of God to suffer again, to purchase their Forgiveness.

Quest. So that *Christ's Suffering* for us, salv'd all the Honour of God's Attributes, and served all the Purposes of his Justice, that would have been served by our suffering for our selves?

Ans. It did so, and to the full as well too; the punishing of his own Son, when he answered for Sinners, shewing a more implacable hatred of sin, and inexorable Justice, than he could have shewn, by punishing all the World, who were Sinners themselves. And therefore his death was a satisfaction to God, for the sins of the whole World. Not only a satisfaction to Benevolence, and yielding Goodness; as when easy and indulgent Natures are pleas'd by any small returns, and incompetent Recompences: but a Satisfaction to Justice, by way of full Compensation and Equivalence.

Christ

Christ, by his own suffering, displaying the Honour of all God's Attributes as much, as God could have displayed them, by punishing the whole Humane Race.

Quest. If the Death and Sacrifice of *Christ*, were so full a satisfaction at first, there is no more now to be paid, and it need never be repeated?

Ans. No, nor ever must it. The Jewish Sacrifices, needed constantly to be repeated; because, being of little worth, and very imperfect, their virtue was soon spent; so that year by year they were continually offered, Heb. 9. 25. and 10. 1, 3. But his, being full and perfect from the first, and leaving nothing to be added, He did not to be offered often, but at once both he put away sin, by the Sacrifice of himself, Heb. 9. 25, 26. and 10. 14. But altho his Sacrifice is no more to be really acted, as it needs not, the whole effect of it being as fresh and full now, as it was at first; yet is it daily still commemorated, and the virtue thereof apply'd, in every good Prayer, but especially in every Sacrament.

Quest. What learn you from *Christ's* dying a Ransom for our sins?

Ans. 1. To *abhor sin*, since it is so odious to God, that he can spare it in no Person, no not in his own Son, when he took other Men's sins upon him. And if he spared not him, when he would bear the punishment for us; how can we hope he will in the least spare us, when we come to undergo it for our selves. If these things were done in the green Tree, what shall be done in the dry? Luk. 23. 31.

2. To give our selves up to the service of *Christ*, who hath bought us for his own Property, at so dear a rate. This is the least we can do, in Equity and Justice. Ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your Bodies and Spirits, which are God's, by such costly purchase, 1 Cor. 6. 20. And if there is any spark of Love and Gratitude in our Hearts, we can do no less in Resentment of such stupendious kindness. For the Love of *Christ* constrains us, because we thus judge, that if *Christ* died for all, they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, 2 Cor. 5. 14, 15.

Quest. Ought it not also to teach us Faith in God, and to beget in us a firm Trust, that he will perform whatever he has promised?

Ans.

Ans. Yes; as plainly shewing, that nothing is too great for his love to make good. *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* Rom. 8. 32.

Quest. Must not his Patience, and Charity in his Sufferings, not reviling again, but praying for his Enemies, teach us the same, when we are called to suffer?

Ans. Yes; for *in suffering thus, without threatening, and when he was reviled, not reviling again, he hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps,* 1 Pet. 2. 21, 23.

Quest. Should not God's imposing so many, and great secular hardships and sufferings on his own most dear Son, make us have easier thoughts of these things than others have, and reconcile us to Affliction?

Ans. In all Reason it should. For it shews how considerable worldly Goods and Glories are in God's Eyes; how temporal evils are allotted to the dearest persons, how proper they are to Discipline, and improve the most virtuous; how they perfect Piety, and what a step they are to Felicity and Glory. *Jesus himself, tho' he were a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered,* Heb. 5. 8. *He was made perfect through suffering,* Heb. 2. 10. *He ought to suffer, and so enter into his Glory,* Luke 24. 26. *We see him for suffering death, crowned with Glory and Honour,* Heb. 2. 9. And seeing Sufferings, not only thus providentially allotted, but also thus profitably undergone, and highly recompenced in him; the blessed Apostles and primitive Saints, whose Ambition it was to be in all things his true followers, did not repine and mourn, but rejoyce and glory in them.

Quest. And since in dying for us, he has shewed us such stupendious Love, must not that mutually endear us, and teach us if we would be his followers, most tenderly to love one another?

Ans. Yes; if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another, 1 Joh. 4. 11. Nay, since hereby we perceive the love of God to us, because he laid down his life for us; we ought, upon just occasion, to lay down our lives for the Brethren, 1 Joh. 3. 16.

Quest. In the Creed, you say dead and buried. When Christ expired upon the Cross, was his Body taken down, and buried?

Ans.

Ans. Yes, it was laid in a Tomb, and a great Stone roll'd before its mouth, according to the Jewish Custom. And for fear his Disciples should come by night, and steal him away, the Jewish Rulers, when they had sealed the Stone, got a Guard from the Governour to watch it, *Mat.* 27. 64, 66.

Quest. What mean you by *Christ's descent into Hell*?

Ans. His abode in that state of Death and Separation, or his Soul's being in the place of Separate Souls, till it was united again to his Body, at his Resurrection; as it is written, *Thou shalt not leave my Soul in Hell*, *Acts* 2. 27. which *St. Peter* there says, was fulfilled in the Resurrection of *Christ*, when he ceased to continue under the power of death, and gloriously arose to triumph over it, *v. 30. 31.*

Quest. Doth the Word *Hell*, sometimes signifie only the State of the Dead, or the place of Souls departed?

Ans. Yes, as *David* lays of all Men, *What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death, and shall he deliver his Soul from the hand of Hell*? *Psal.* 89. 48. And as *Jacob* talked of going down to *Hell* to *Joseph*, when he thought some evil Beast had devoured him, *Gen.* 37. 33, 35. In both which places, the word translated *Grave* in our Bibles, in the Greek is *Hades*, the very word that stands for *Hell* here in the Creed. Oft-times, indeed, especially in the *New Testament*, *Hell* signifies, not in general, the state of the Dead, but particularly the state of the Wicked, and the place of Torment. In which sense it is not likely that *Christ* descended into *Hell* after his death, because in his dying hour he told the Penitent Thief, *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, *Luke* 23. 43.

C H A P. III.

Of the Resurrection of Christ, and his sitting at God's Right-Hand.

The Contents.

An Account how Christ may be said to have been three days in the Earth. His Resurrection proved. The necessity of it. He ascended to Heaven. What is meant by his sitting at the Right-hand of God. There be, 1. Interceders for us, as our Priest. This intercession not vocal, by Words and formal Pleas, but by presenting himself, and his own meritorious Sacrifice. He intercedes only for Covenant-Mercies, and on Covenant-Terms. He is an Intercessor of absolute Power with God, and truest Affection for us. One part of his intercession, is to hand and present our Prayers to God. Therefore whensoever we pray for any thing, 'tis both our duty, and wisdom to apply by him. 2. Governs his Church, as a King. In what Acts this consists. 3. Instructs his Church, as a Prophet, by sending to it the Holy Ghost. Christ's Body having now taken up its fixt abode at God's Right-hand, we are not in any Ordinances to expect his Bodily Presence, but only a Presence by his Spirit, which is more to be desired. Some Inferences from Christ's sitting at God's Right-hand.

Question. **H**OW long did Jesus Christ abide in the state of the Dead ; till his Body was corrupted ?

Answer. No, he staid not so long. God did not suffer his Holy One to see Corruption, Acts 13. 35, 36, 37. but reunited his Soul and Body, and raised him from the dead on the third day, which is before the time that Corruption usually seizes the Bodies of dead Men.

Quest. Christ said of himself, as the Jews told Pilate That after three days he would rise again, Mat. 27. 63. And as Jonas was three days, and three nights, in the

Wvale

Whales Belly: so, says he, shall the Son of Man be three days, and three nights, in the heart of the Earth, Mat. 12. 40. But if he died, as we commemorate his death, upon Good Friday; and rose † early on Easter-day in the † Mar. 16. morning, there were only part of two days, and one, 1, 2. enire day between.

Ans. That is three days, according to common computation of days, both Ancient and Modern, and particularly in Scripture reckoning. Thus Lazarus is said to have been four days dead, though the fourth day, whereon Jesus raised him up, was one of them, John 11. 39. And eight days are said to be accomplished, for Christ's Circumcision; but the day of his Birth, and Circumcision too, went both into that Reckoning, Luke 2. 21. And the Priests in their courses were appointed, and † reputed, to Minister before the Lord eight days, though the time of Entrance, and Release, was † every Sabbath day morning. And accordingly, what in the currant way of expression, is thus sometimes termed three days, our Saviour speaking more exactly at other times, expresses by on the third, or within three days. Jesus shewed his Disciples, he should rise again the third day, Mat. 16. 21. and 17. 23. and 20. 19. And, destroy this Temple, and in three days I will raise it up, Joh. 2. 19. or, within three days, as the Jews, who otherwise call it after three days, related it, Mark 14. 58.

Quest. How doth it appear, that Christ was raised again from the dead?

Ans. It might appear to any, who had the curiosity to look into the Sepulchre; for they would see he was gone.

Quest. What said the Watch, who stood to guard him?

Ans. They knew it full well, for when the Angel, with a Countenance like Lightning, descended in an Earthquake, to roll back the Stone, the Keepers saw it, and shaked, and became as dead men, Mat. 28. 2, 3, 4. But the Jewish Rulers bribed them, to say, his Disciples came by night, and stole him away while they slept, v. 11, 12, 13, 14. which was a foolish lye, and bore along with it its own Confutation.

Quest. How so?

P

Ans.

† Joseph.
Antiqu. l.
7. c. 11.
† 2 King.
11. 5, 7. &
2 Chron.
23. 4.

Ans. Because, if they were asleep, how could they tell that any one stole him? If they had any thoughts of what others did then, it could be only in a Dream; unless they would pretend to sleep with their Senses awake, and their Eyes open.

Quest. But *this saying*, saith St. Matthew, is commonly reported among the Jews, and passes for a Truth with them, *Mat.* 28. 15. And by what other ways can you convince them, that *Christ* is risen?

Ans. By those that saw him, and converted with him after his Resurrection. For he appeared for the space of † *Act. 1. 3.* † forty days to his Apostles, and to satisfy them he had a real Body, eat and drank with them after he was risen, *Acts* 10. 41. *Luke* 24. 43. He appeared to Thomas, who searched the holes which the Nails had made in his Hands, and thrust his Finger into his Side, where the Spear had pierced it, before he would believe him, *Joh.* 20. 27, 28. To five hundred Brethren all at one time, *1 Cor.* 15. 6. To Stephen in a bright Glory from Heaven, at his Martyrdom, *Acts* 7. 56. and to Saul, at his Conversion, *Acts* 9. 3, 4. Yea, after he was risen, and gone to Heaven, he sent down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles and Followers, which shewed, not only that he is alive again, but also that he lives in Power.

Quest. The Apostles seem extraordinary careful, to confirm the Resurrection of Christ, and call the ordaining one to be an Apostle, ordaining him to be a witness of it, *Acts* 1. 22. Was it necessary that Christ should rise from the dead?

Ans. Yes, to shew that the debt which he died for was discharged, and that his satisfaction was accepted. He died as a Sacrifice, to satisfy for our sins; and till God raised him up again, it did not appear that he was satisfied with what Christ had done for us. If Christ be not risen, ye are yet in your sins, *1 Cor.* 15. 17.

Quest. But was not his death a full payment, and on the Cross, did he not relate to that, when he said it is finished, *Joh.* 19. 30?

Ans. It was so indeed, the price of Redemption then was fully paid. But till he raised him up again, God had given no publick Acquittance, nor done any open Act, to shew we were discharged by it. So that by his Resurrection, we are said to be justified, that is, declared

to be so. *He died for our sins, and rose again for our Justification*, Rom. 4. 25. and *who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again*, Rom. 8. 34.

Quest. Was his Resurrection necessary on any other Accounts?

Ans. Yes, for, 2. In virtue of his death, he was to be our *Mediator*, to intercede with God for us, and our *Saviour* and *Deliverer*, to protect and rescue us from our *Spiritual Enemies*: And these great works suppose a live man, and are not to be performed by a dead person. And being thus necessary to discharge his continual care of us; it must be equally so, to support our Faith and Trust in him. When men are dead, we expect no service, or succour from them: And therefore were he still in the Grave, we should not fix our Hope and Trust in him, or make our Addresses to him.

Quest. Was it necessary, to shew him to be the *Messiah*, and to prove his Religion?

Ans. Yes, for he had appealed to it, as a *sign* of his being a *true Prophet*, Mat. 12. 38, 39, 40. And therefore by the way of tryal which God † prescribed to the † Deut. 18. Jews, viz. the accomplishment of predictions, he had ap- 18, 21, 22. pear'd to be a false Prophet, had he failed in it. So that if Christ be not risen, saith St. Paul, your Faith is vain, 1 Cor. 15. 14.

Quest. In his Death and Resurrection methinks we have a plain and palpable instance of the immortality of Humane Souls, and of a future Life beyond the Grave, where God may reward or punish us?

Ans. So we have. For his Soul manifestly did exist apart from his Body, during the time of their Separation, till on the *third day* it was reunited again. So that mens Souls can subsist without their Bodies, as well as in them, and when they depart hence, go into another place, where they are capable of being called to account for all they have done in this life. On which account, as well as others, St. Paul might well say, That God hath given assurance of a future Life and Judgment, by raising Christ from the dead, Acts 17. 31. And St. Peter, That God hath begotten us to the hope of an *Eternal Inheritance*, thro' the Resurrection of Christ from the Dead, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

Quest. We read of several others, that rose from the Dead, as well as *Christ*; had he any thing singular in his Resurrection above them?

Ans. Yes, he raised himself by his own power, but they were all raised by him; he was not only the *first* that rose, but as the *First-Fruits*, and all the World besides rise as the ensuing Crop, which depends upon him. *Destroy this Temple*, saith he, *and in three days I will raise it up*, Joh. 2. 19, 21. *I lay down my life, and take it up again*, Joh. 10. 18. *He is the first-born from the Dead*, Col. 1. 18. Rev. 1. 5. *As in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive: but every man in his own order, Christ the First-fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming*, 1 Cor. 15. 22, 23.

Quest. But did not *Lazarus* rise before *Christ*, John 11. 44. and *Fairus's Daughter*, Luk. 8. 55. and the *Widows Son of Nain*, Luk. 7. 12, 14, 15. and how then is he said to be the *first of the Dead*, that returned?

Ans. They returned to die again; but he was the first that rose to life everlasting. *He being raised, dieth no more, death has no more dominion over him*, Rom. 6. 9.

Quest. By his Resurrection, *Christ* got Glory and Happiness to himself, even that Joy, for which St Paul says, *he endured the Cross*, Heb. 12. 2. But did he thereby acquire any Power over us?

Ans. Yes, his Death purchased, and his Resurrection invested him, with an absolute Power and Dominion over us. *For this end, Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord, both of the Dead and Living*, Rom. 14. 9. And after his Resurrection, saith he, *All Power is given to me, both in Heaven, and in Earth*, Mat. 28. 18.

Quest. If so, his Resurrection lays an obligation upon us to obey him?

Ans. Yes; like as he rose from the dead, so must we rise to newness of life, Rom. 6. 4.

Quest. How long stay'd he upon Earth, after he was risen again?

Ans. For the space of forty days, discoursing, and speaking of the things concerning the Kingdom of God, Acts 1. 3.

Quest.

Quest. Whither went he when he left it ?

Ans. To Heaven, whither he was taken up in a bright Cloud, all the *Apostles* looking up after him, till he was taken up out of their sight, *Acts* 1. 3, 9. And now he is there, he sitteth at the right hand of God,

Quest. What mean you by his sitting at the right hand of God ?

Ans. His advancement to the height of Dignity and Authority, in the presence of God. The *Right-hand* of a Prince, is the place of peculiar Favour, and of highest Honour and Respect: as *Solomon*, when he would do Honour to his Mother *Bathsheba*, set her at his *Right hand*, *1 King* 2. 19. To be placed at hand, by the privilege of nearness, gives opportunity for Conference and Address: And to be placed at the *Right-hand*, the Hand of use and business, is to be in the way, both of presenting all Offers and receiving of Returns; whence it is a known mark of special Favour and Honour, with all Potentates. And so by Christ's sitting at God's *Right-Hand*, is expressed his Sovereign Honour and Power in the presence of God. Or, perhaps, moreover his sitting in his humane shape, on the *Right-hand* of that Bright Throne, or Resplendant Glory, which visibly accompanies, and manifests some extraordinary presence of God: as he appeared to *Stephen* in his Vision, who saw the Glory of God, and *Jesus* standing on the *Right-hand* of God; that is. I suppose, at the *Right-hand* of that visible Glory, wherewith God appeared, *Acts* 7. 55. And this probably, is what the *Scripture* means, by his sitting at the *Right-hand* of Power, *Mat.* 26. 64. and on the *Right-hand* of Majesty, *Heb.* 1. 3. That is, on the *Right-hand* of such † Glory, or bright Appearance, which is the usual Symbol of God's Power and Majesty, which at other times is expressed, by his sitting on the *Right-hand* of the Throne of God, *Heb.* 12. 2. or, on the *Right-hand* of the Throne of the Majesty in the Heavens, *Heb.* 8. 1.

† *Exod.* 24. 16, 17.
Ezek. 1. 27, 28.

Quest. It was most just that he should be exalted thither, in recompence of his meritorious sufferings, as the *Apostle* notes, *Phil.* 2. 8, 9. and *Heb.* 12. 2. But is he gone thither, to carry on any Designs for us ?

Ans. Yes, and those of the greatest importance. For there, in the highest manner and to the fullest effect, he exercises all his Offices on our behalf.

Quest. I pray you explain the Designs which he carries on for us there?

Ans. First, The work of *Intercession*, as our Priest. For he stands before God to mediate on our behalf, and to obtain for us, whatsoever God has promised, or he himself has purchased, or we stand in need of. He is enter'd into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us, Heb. 9. 24.

Quest. Doth he then plead with God, and move and Perition him, for all the things which we gain from him?

Ans. His Intercession is not by Words, and formal Pleas, and Supplications; but by Actions; that is, by presenting of himself, and shewing his own Sacrificed Body before God. He intercedes, by shewing of himself, and therefore St. Paul calls his Intercession, *his appearance in the presence of God for us*, Heb. 9. 24.

Quest. And is this way as effectual, as by forming Vocal Pleas?

Ans. Yes, undoubredly. The Blood of his Sacrifice, as St. Paul says, *speaks*, Heb. 12. 24. It doth not only breathe out Prayers, but it prefers Claims and Demands; and those too, not only in virtue of God's Promise, but also of his own Merits and dear-bought Purchase, which is a way of moving with Power and Prevalence, beyond all expressions.

Quest. Did the High-Priest among the Jews, intercede thus?

Ans. Yes, when he went in to intercede with God in the Holy of Holies, after he had slain the Sacrifice, he was not directed to make any set Speeches, and vocal Supplications, but only to carry in the Blood of Expiation, and present it to God, by sprinkling it upon, and before the Mercy-seat, Lev. 16. 14, 15. which real exhibition of the thing it self, that was to plead for them, was more moving and effectual, than any Verbal Speech, or Vocal Prayer, he could have put up for them.

Quest.

Quest. And will Christ continue thus to intercede for us; that is to shew himself, and exhibit his Sacrifice before God in our behalf, always?

Ans. Yes, *he ever lives to make intercession for us*, which renders him able to *save to the uttermost, them that come to God by him*, Heb. 7. 25. And therefore *the Heavens must receive him, till the restitution of all things*, Acts 3. 21. It was enough for the *Sacrificing* part of his *Priest-hood*, which made the *Purchase*, to be once done. But the *Interceding* part, which brings down the purchased Blessings to all men, in all times and places, must still be a doing. And therefore he continues in the presence of God, to shew himself, and intercede, to the end of the World; which will be so long, as he will exercise his Mediatory Power, or we shall stand in need of his Intercession.

Quest. What things will he move, and intercede with God for, which therefore we may make sure to speed in?

Ans. For all the Benefits that he has purchased, and God has promised, which are all contain'd in the *New-Covenant*. His intercession in virtue of his Blood, is only to apply the Merits and Purchase of it. So that as at first he *shed* it, so now he *shews* his Blood, for *Covenant-Mercies*, and on *Covenant-Terms*; but he never moves that any Person should obtain them otherwise.

Quest. Then he will never move for wicked and obdurate Sinners, that God would relax the severity of his Laws for their sakes. Nor, for slothful and careless ones, that by an over-powering and irresistible Grace, he would do all for them, and work his Will in them, and so save all their Pains, since the New Covenant offers no Pardon, but to the Penitent; nor any saving Grace, but to the Sincere and Industrious?

Ans. Very Right.

Quest. By this I see, that we must by no means look upon Christ at God's Right-Hand, as a Biassed, Partial Advocate, who seeks to wring what he can from God, and to gain all for our side. But as an Equal and Impartial Mediator, who has a just Regard to both sides, and will shew himself as careful of God's Authority and Honour, by securing him of our Duty, as of our welfare, by obtaining for us his Mercy?

Ans. Most certainly. For this cause, saith St. Paul, of purging our Consciences from dead Works to God's Service, as well, as that they who are called, may receive the Promise of the Eternal Inheritance, he is the Mediator of the New Testament, Heb. 9. 14, 15. In discharging this Trust, we may be sure, in the height of all his care for us, he will be just to God. Nay, being God's own Son, and both infinitely nearer Related to him, and better pleased with him, than he is with us, were he any ways capable of being byassed, we cannot imagine it should be on ours, but on his side. So that in all the Part he acts as our *Intercessor*, we must not imagine, that he will in the least dishonour God to oblige us, or ever once aim, or attempt to make us secure, in any undutifulness, and contempt of his, and our Heavenly Father.

Quest. Surely, being the most dearly Beloved Son of God, he must needs be an *Intercessor* of Great Power?

Ans. Yes, of Absolute Power, and infallibly sure to gain whatsoever he moves for. For, besides his Relation and Filial nearness, he continually Represents his own infinite Merits, which can claim any Favours. Nay, for the sake of those Merits, on this Appearance to plead them before God, he is made a *Royal Priest*, and has all Power given unto him as a King, so that he can grant what he pleases. *Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye ask any thing in my Name, I will do it.* Joh. 14. 13, 14.

Quest. This shews how able he is to Succeed, but is he willing, and ready to use all his Interest, and move for us?

Ans. No doubt of that. For his Love has made him shed for us his own Heart's Blood, and therefore it can never stick at any other Service, or at procuring for us any Blessings from Almighty God. *He is a Merciful, and Faithful High Priest*, both true to our Interests, and tender of our Infirmities, having felt them in himself, Heb. 2. 17. and 4. 15. and therefore is as willing and ready, as he is able to intercede for us.

Quest. Is it particularly any part of his Intercession, to hand and present our Prayers?

Ans.

Ans. Yes. This was the Buſinels of the *Jewiſh Priests*. One part of their *Priest-hood* was to burn *Incense*, which was to perfume the Peoples Prayers, who, as *St. Luke* notes, *prayed without, in the time of Incense, Luk. 1. 10.* presenting their Prayers to God in these sweet Smells; whence the *Psalmist* begs that his Prayers may be set forth before God as the *Incense*, *Pſal. 141. 2.* And the *Vials of Odors*, or *Incense*, in the *Revelations*, *St. John* ſays, are the Prayers of the *Saints*, *Rev. 5. 8.* And this accordingly, *Chriſt* our Interceſſor in Heaven doth for us: for he is the *Angel* in the *Revelations*, who on the golden Altar before the Throne, offers the *Incense*, with the Prayers of all *Saints*, *Rev. 8. 3.* By him it is we muſt preſent all our Prayers; whence we are ſaid, thro' him to have acceſs to the Father. *Eph. 2. 18.* and in him to have boldneſs, and acceſs with confidence, *Eph. 3. 12.* Nay, ſince the Prayers which we put up, have many ſinful Defects adhering to them, they are fit to come to a moſt holy God from the Hand of no other Mediator, but of him, who has not only the acceptableneſs of his Perſon to prefer, but the Merit of his Sacrifice too to atone for them.

Queſt. By this it ſhould ſeem, that whenſoever we pray for any thing to Almighty God, we ſhould not ſeek after other Mediators, but apply by him. And ſince he is ſo powerful in Mediation, this is not only our bounden Duty, but our trueſt Wiſdom?

Ans. So it is: For, he is our Advocate with the Father, *1 Joh. 2. 1.* the one Mediator between God and Man, *1 Tim. 2. 5.* Whatſoever, ſays he, you ſhall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you *John 16. 23.* We are ſure he is now in the immediate Preſence of God, to prefer any Suit; but we are not ſure that Departed Saints are there, who, for ought we know, may be kept till the laſt Day, in ſome inferior Place of Comfort and Refreshment; Good Souls, as I ſhall note hereafter, not receiving their Conſummation before the laſt Judgment. When we addreſs by him, we only take that way of Application which God himſelf has preſcribed; and in all Juſtice, and Reaſon, we ſhould allow God the Direction how we ſhall ſeek his Favours, ſince he is the moſt Free and Sovereign Diſpoſer of them. Nay, ſince the Prayers, which we put up, are uttered

uttered by sinful Lips, and are mingled with our own Frailties and Defects; they can come worthy and pure to God from him alone, whose Blood, as I said, has Merit enough to purge them, as well as his Person Favour enough to prefer them. Tho' a perfect Prayer, had not God otherwise ordered it, might in it self be presented, especially from a perfect Man, by any acceptable Mediator; yet a sinful Prayer, from sinful Men, doth plainly need such a Mediator, as in the same Person is both *Intercessor* and *Redeemer*. Thus the *Altar of Incense*, among the *Jews*, which stood without the *Vail*, before the *Mercy-seat*, daily to perfume and present the Peoples Prayers, was once a year to be sprinkled with the Blood of Atonement; plainly intimating, that the Means of presenting Prayers, must be endow'd withal with a Power of expiating them, *Exod.* 30. 6, 7, 8, 10. And accordingly, the *Apostle* mentions Christ's Mediation, as joyn'd to, and founded on his Redemption. *One Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a Ransom for all*, 1 Tim. 2. 5, 6. And, *If any Man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, who is also the Propitiation for our Sins*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2.

Quest. What other Design doth Christ carry on for us in Heaven?

Ans. 2. The Care of Governing his Church as a King. He is at the Right-hand of God; Angels, and Authorities, and Powers, being subject unto him, 1 Pet. 3. 22. and all Authority in Heaven, and Earth, being put into his Hand, Mat. 28. 18. This Power he purchased by his Death; but was put in full Possession of it, when he came to claim it by his Intercession.

Quest. Wherein doth he exercise this Plenitude of Power?

Ans. In Giving Laws to his Church: For he is the one Law-giver, that is able either to save, or to destroy, Jam. 4. 12. And since he is the Legislator in Religion, 'tis an Usurpation upon his Prerogative, for any to form to themselves a new-fangled Worship, and beat out other Paths to Heaven of their own devising.

In Protecting it from all, both outward and intestine Enemies, whether the World, the Flesh, or Men, or Devils. For he sits at God's Right-band, till his Enemies be

he made his Foot-stool, Psa. 110. 1. and Heb. 10. 12, 13. and he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his feet, 1 Cor. 15. 25.

And, lastly, in judging all the World, to their present Portion of the Eternal State when they leave the Body, and to the full Consummation of it at the last Day. For now, *the Father judgeth no Man, but hath committed all Judgment to the Son*, John 5. 22, 27. Which, as it makes for the unspeakable Comfort of all his Faithful Servants, since they are to be judg'd by their own *Advocate*, who has preferr'd their Ease and Happiness to his own Life; so will it be to the eternal Terror of all *those his Enemies*, who would not have him to reign over them, Luke 19. 27. And all this Power he exercises himself from Heaven, besides what he doth by his *Bishops and Pastors*, who are the Officers of his Kingdom, and his Deputies and Substitutes here on Earth.

Quest. Has he any other Business to do for us at God's Right-hand, as our King?

Ans. Yes, to prepare a place for us, and allot us Royal Habitations with himself. *I go to prepare a Place for you, and I will come again, and receive you to my self, that where I am, there ye may be also*, Joh. 14. 2, 3. The First Adam lost Paradise, and the Second Adam was to restore us to it: Who, after he had merited it for us by his Cross, ascended into Heaven, to instal our Nature there, and claim his Purchase. And, discharging the mighty Angel, whose flaming Sword, after the Fall, was set to guard the Passage to it from our Intrusions, open'd the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers.

Quest. What further Concern did he transact for us, by going to Heaven?

Ans. 3. As a *Prophet*, he sent down the *Holy Ghost*, to instruct his Church in his Absence, and to be with us in his stead. *It is expedient for you, that I go away: For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you*, John 16. 7. Being by the Right-hand of God exalted, he received the Promise of the *Holy Ghost*, Acts 2. 33. and sent him on his *Apostles*, to abide with them for ever, John 14. 16.

Quest. How did the *Holy-Spirit* supply his Absence?

Ans. By endowing them with such miraculous Gifts, as enabled them to propagate his Religion through the World

World as effectually, as if he had staid with them; and with such inward Graces, as would fit themselves for those Mansions which he had provided for them. Of both which, I shall say more in their proper place.

Quest. And these Gifts, you say, he ascended to bestow upon his Church?

Ans. Yes; *the Holy-Ghost was not to be given, till after Jesus was glorified*, John 7. 39. but *when he ascended up on high, he received Gifts for Men, that the Lord might dwell among them*, Psal. 68. 18. and Eph. 4. 8.

Quest. Now our Saviour Christ is Ascended, is not his Glorified Body to take up its Mansion, and sit Abode at God's Right-hand?

Ans. Yes; as *St. Peter told the Jews, the Heavens must receive him, unto the Times of Restitution of all things, Acts 3. 21.* And then, as the *Angel told his Apostles, he shall so come again to judge the World from Heaven, in like manner as they then saw him go into Heaven, Acts 1. 11.*

Quest. If his Bodily Presence, and Local Above be at the Right-hand of God's Throne in Heaven, then we are not to expect any thing of a Bodily Presence in any Ordinances here on Earth?

Ans. No; as to his Bodily Presence, it is expressly said, *that he parted from his Disciples, Luke 24. 51. that he left the World, Joh. 16. 28. and is no more in the World, John 17. 11. and, tho the Poor we should, yet him we should not have always with us, Mat. 26. 11. that whilst we are in the Body, we are absent from him, 2 Cor. 5. 6. and are not to be with him, till we depart hence, Phil. 1. 23. that his Bodily Abode is in Heaven, where he is to remain till the Consummation, Acts 3. 21. and without ascending to Heaven to fetch him, there is no bringing him back to Earth again, Rom. 10. 6. and when he comes to judge the World, it shall be from thence by Change of Place and Local Motion, call'd his Descending from Heaven, 1 Thess. 4. 16. and coming in the Clouds of Heaven, Mat. 26. 64. and the Saints are to be call'd up from the Earth into the Air to meet him, 1 Thess. 4. 17. All which plainly imply his Bodily Presence to be circumscribed, and limited to God's Right hand, and to be no longer now in this World. But the way of Christ's Presence now with his Church, is by his Spirit, which works the same*

same Effects, and confers the same Graces, that he himself would, were he personally upon Earth. His Spirit is his *Advocate*, who was to succeed in his Place, to maintain his Cause, *John 15. 26.* and to stay with us all the time of his absence, *he shall abide with you for ever, John 14. 16.* And this Presence of his Spirit, in all complear-ness of Vertue and real Effects, he himself judges preferable to all Ocular Manifestations of his Person or Sensible Presence; which, tho it might serve more to delight our Eyes, and entertain our Fancies, yet would signifie less to real and desirable Purposes. 'Tis expedient for you, says he, *that I go away*, speaking to his Disciples of his Bodily Absence: *For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but if I depart, I will send him, Joh. 16. 7.* And, *It is the Spirit that quickneth, but the Flesh profits nothing*, said he at another time to the gross Capernaïtes, upon a like Competition of these two ways of his Presence with us, *John 6. 63.*

Quest. What must we learn from Christ's being exalted to such Sovereign and Supereminent Authority, at God's Right-hand?

Ans. To render him the Reverence, and Obedience which is due to so high a Majesty. For since God has thus highly exalted him, at his Name every Knee must bow, and every Tongue confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, *Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.*

Quest. What from his being so Compassionate, and Powerful an Advocate?

Ans. To come to him in every Want or Distress, with Confidence and Assurance of Faith; being fully perswaded, both of his Kindness for us, and of his Interest with God, to obtain whatsoever is necessary, or convenient for us. Having such an High-Priest, let us come boldly unto the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need, *Heb. 4. 14, 16.* But particularly, to come with sure Hope and Expectation of the Pardon of our Sins, when we truly repent of them; and of his Good Spirit and Grace, when we are careful to make a Diligent and Right use of them. If any Man Sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is a Propitiation for our Sins, *1 John 2. 1, 2.* And, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that dyed, yea rather that is risen again, who also maketh intercession for us. *Rom. 3. 34.*

Quest.

Quest. What learn we from his Power to Subdue all his Enemies ?

Ans. To trust him, as I noted above, with the care of our selves, and of his Church, and not suffer our selves to be cast into any anxious Fears, or forced upon the use of any unlawful means, by any Streights. But to believe, (let Dangers and Disorders be what they will,) that the Lord Reigns, and that we and all his faithful People, are safest whilst we are doing our Dury, and are in his hands. That indeed, is the true way to yield present security, but especially, if thereby we happen to suffer, to make sure a surpassing Recompence of Glory. *For this is a Faithful saying, if we be dead with him, that is to Sin, we shall also live with him, that is in Glory: If we suffer and endure, that is, persevere in obeying, chiefly when we obey with Loss and Difficulty, we shall also Reign with him, 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12.*

Quest. Since Christ is now in Heaven, and we profess to fix all our Hopes in him: Should not that make us think much of that Place where he is, and of the way to come thither ?

Ans. Without Question it should. *If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the Right Hand of God, Col. 3. 1. Here in the Body, we sojourn from the Lord, 2 Cor. 5. 6. In this World we are Strangers and Pilgrims, 1 Pet. 2. 11. But God above is our Father, and Jesus Christ, at God's Right-Hand, is our Lord, and the Glorified Saints are our Fellow Citizens, Eph. 2. 19. And being thus God's Family or Domesticks, our Conversations should be, where our Civil Relation and Society is, that is in Heaven, whence also we look for the Lord Jesus, Phil. 3. 20. Since our Treasure is with him in Heaven, there should our Hearts be also, Mat. 6. 21. So that although in passing through this World, we cannot quite neglect the things of it, yet must we always heedfully mind, and carefully seek the things above it.*

C H A P. IV.

Of the Future Judgment.

The Contents.

The necessity of the Future Judgment. All men are judged, and made happy or miserable, at their Deaths. But not so fully then, as they will be afterwards. The Compleat and General Judgment, is at the end of the World. In that, Jesus Christ is to be the Judge. Who are to be judged. In that Judgment no Condemnation, but for breaking God's Laws: So not for indifferent things. Men shall be tryed and sentenced for all their sinful Actions, with regard to their lasting Effects. For their most secret ones. And such ill deeds as were disguised under the fairest Pretences. For their sinful Omissions. And Neglecting to employ, and improve their Talents. For sinful Words. And Thoughts and Desires. For all these Men shall be judged impartially, without respect of Persons. But with Equity and Candor, not in Rigour. The Benign Judge will be very ready to observe what makes for us, and make the best of our Performances. And interpret the seemingly Rigorous Expressions of his own Laws, with great condescension to Humane Measures. He will allow for involuntary Failings. And judge Candidly and Favourably of that involuntariness. And for Natural Infirmities. And for Providential disadvantages, as Multiplicity of Business, greatness of Temptations, Bodily Indispositions. For Pitiabie Defects of Degrees in Duties. Great Latitude on the side of Bliss, and all not required to be of the same Size. He will Reward Good Things, tho' done with Difficulty and Reluctance, yea, when Pitiably stain'd with impure mixtures. Our Judge will shew all this Candor, and would have us expect it. In Recompensing good Men, he will consider the Difficulties and Oppositions. And the hazard, and cost of their Services. And the hardships of Providence, allotted to exercise good Men in this Life. Of the Condemnation of ill Men. The Fire, which is to torment them, shall burn up and dissolve the World. Practical Inferences from the last Judgment.

Quest.

Quest. **T**HE Seventh Article is, That, from God's Right-Hand, *Jesus Christ shall come to judge both the quick and the dead.* Is there any Necessity of a Future Judgment?

Ans. Yes, upon many Accounts. As,

1st. For an exact Discrimination, to distinguish Persons. Numbers of ill Men are Hypocrites, or Good only in outward appearance; and these pass here for Saints. But at the last Day, God will make them manifest, and put them into *Separate Companies, Dividing, as Christ foretold, the Sheep from the Goats*, Mat. 25. 32.

2. For the clearing of God's Justice, which seems in this World oftentimes, to misplace Rewards and Punishments, afflicting the Righteous, and making Sinners prosperous: and which therefore will surely be manifested in allotting more suitable Retributions, visibly Rewarding the good, and Punishing the wicked afterwards. Thus St. Paul told the *Thessalonians*, that their Present Sufferings, who were God's good Servants, was a Token and Pledge of God's Future Rewards on them, and of his Punishments upon their Persecutors. *The Persecutions, and Tribulations you endure, are a manifest Token of the Righteous Judgment of God*, i. e. a token and engagement, that God will hereafter manifest his Righteous Judgment, in their Punishment, and your Reward. *Seeing it is a Righteous Thing with God, to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, Rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels*, 2 Thel. 1. 4, 5, 6, 7. And that Day, St. Paul calls the Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God, when, however here they might seem connived at, God will render to every Man according to his Deeds, Rom. 2. 5, 6.

3. For Reversing the Error of all Humane Judgments. All Humane Courts are under God, who is the Supreme Dispenser of Justice, and the Protector of injured Innocence. And therefore if Humane Courts, who are his Substitutes, through Corruption, or Mistake, do Condemn the Innocent; it may beseem him, whose Care comprehends, and whose Justice will do Right to all, to Reverse the Error, and clear them again to all the World.

4. For

4. For the support of Religion, which has no sufficient encouragement, without Hope of future Rewards. *He that comes to God in Religion, must believe he is a Rewarder of those that diligently seek him, Heb. 11. 6. Moses, and the Patriarchs, served God, out of a Respect to the Recompence of a Reward. v. 26. And this Reward was not present here, but future in another World. They dyed, not having received the Promises, but only having seen them afar off, confessing themselves here to be Strangers and Pilgrims, and to seek a Country in a better place. v. 13, 14, 16. So that they were Religious, from an eye to future Judgment and Retributions.*

Quest. From these Reasons, it may seem fit and necessary, that God should have a Future Judgment; but are we sure that he will have it?

Ans. Yes; he hath given assurance unto all men, that he will judge the World by Jesus Christ, by raising him from the Dead. Act. 17. 31.

Quest. How doth this assure it?

Ans. Both as an Instance of it, since thereby he most justly rewarded our Saviour Christ, who had done and suffered so much for him in this World. And also as it was Gods owning, and irrefragable Testimony to his Doctrine, which declares the Future Judgment as one of its Principal Parts.

Quest. When is this Judgment to be?

Ans. At the end of the World, when there shall be no more Days of Labour and Tryal, but all of Recompence, in Punishment or Reward.

Quest. If it be so far off, men will be the less afraid of it, they being very apt to overlook Dangers that lye remote; as indeed, when any things are far distant, to look upon Great ones as little, and little ones as none at all. And will none be judged, till the end of the World?

Ans. Yes: That is only for the General Judgment of all men. But every particular Man is sentenced at his Death, either to a State of Bliss, or Misery.

Quest. But if a man be condemned in the First Judgment, since there is so great a Distance betwixt it and the Second, may he not have time to make his Peace, and either by doing or suffering something himself, or by the Care and Kindness of his Friends, offering Sa-

Q

crifices,

crifices, Prayers or Alms for him, get the Sentence reversed; and his State alter'd, and come off clear at the last Judgment?

Ans. No: Betwixt the Place of Rewards and Punishments, in the other World, there is an *unpassable Gulph fixed, so that they who would pass from you to us cannot*; as *Abraham*, told the *Rich Man in Torment* *.
 * Luk. 16. 26. There is neither Repentance nor Reconciliation in the Grave. *When once the Night is come*, says our Saviour, *no Man can Work*, Joh. 9. 4. Now, in this Life, saith *St. Paul*, is the *accepted Time*, now is the *Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. And at the last Day, Men shall all be tryed, not for what they have done, or suffered since they were separate Spirits, but for what they did when they were Cloathed with their Bodies; giving account for every thing done in the Body, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And those deeds, are not what others have done for us, but what, through the Grace of God, and the Benefit of their Prayers, we have been enabled to do for our selves. Every Man shall receive for things done in his Body, according to what he hath done, saith *St. Paul*. And every Mans cause of rejoicing, must be in himself alone, and not in another, by passing over his Neighbours Prayers, or Merits to him. For every Man shall bear his own Burden, Gal. 6. 4, 5. As a just God will not punish one for anothers Sin; so neither will he accept one for anothers Well-doing, *Exek.* 18. 20.

Quest. If Sentence is so quickly passed upon them, the Souls of good men are not in a deep sleep, and insensible State, but enter upon Happiness, as the Souls of ill men do upon misery, as soon as they leave this world?

Ans. Yes, they do so. For this day, says our Saviour to the *Penitent Thief*, *thou shalt be with me in Paradise*, i. e. in a Place of Happiness, Luk. 23. 43. And for me to dye is gain, saith *S. Paul*, whereas an insensible State would have brought him no Advantage, *Phil.* 1. 21. And when we are absent from the Body, we are present with the Lord, which presence notes happy enjoyment, 2 Cor. 5. 68. And *Lazarus*, when he dyed, was carried into *Abraham's bosom*, and *Dives* lift up his eyes in Hell, being in Torment, Luk. 16. 22, 23. All which shew, the Deceased Righteous to be Happy,
 (as

(as the Wicked Wretched,) not only in expectation, but in present enjoyment.

Quest. You speak this of all the Righteous?

Ans. Yes, for the Scripture makes no Difference. *This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, said Christ to the *Penitent Thief*, tho' he had been a very great Sinner, and was but a very young Convert. And the usual way of expressing the Death of good Men, is by their † *falling asleep*, which notes Ease and Refreshment. And in general it is said of those *that die in the Lord*, that *from henceforth they are blessed, and rest from their Labours*, Rev. 14. 13. So that this *Present Life*, as our Lord notes in the * *Story of Lazarus*, is the Time of *their receiving evil things*: And they are no longer exercised with Torments, but, what is inconsistent with them, enter upon ease and comfort, in degree more or less, according to the difference of their virtuous Attainments, immediately upon their Deaths.

† 1 Cor. 15.
6, 8, 20, 51.
& 1 Thes.
3. 13, 14,
15.
* Luk. 16.
25.

Quest. But is the Happiness of the one, or the Misery of the other, so full then, as it shall be after the last Judgment?

Ans. No; for now their Souls only are Happy, but then their Bodies shall be raised too, and the Bliss of the whole man, both Soul and Body, shall be compleat. And then they shall be happy in a fuller degree, and have a more perfect measure of it. This increase of Happiness they shall receive at the last Judgment; and therefore it is † called the Time of their being crown'd, or rewarded, , 2 Tim. 4. 8. and they are represented as desiring it. So the Souls under the Altar, slain for the Testimony of Jesus, do in the Revelations, asking how long God would delay to judge the World, for the Consummation of their Reward, and of their Persecutors Punishment, Rev. 6. 9, 10, 11. And so it is with the damned Spirits too, the heaviest part of their Doom being still to come, and their present Miseries, tho' very great, being but Foretastes and Beginnings of what they are to be consign'd to at the last Day. Thus the Devils are said to be reserved in Chains, against the Judgment of the Great Day; their present State, it seems in comparison of it, being no more than the Misery of a Prison, compared to that of the Day of Execution,

† Luk. 14.
14.
2 Thess. 1.
6, 7.

2. Pet. 2. 4. and Jude 6. And the Devils ask Christ, if he were come to torment them before the time; plainly intimating, that the Fulness of their Torment was not to be, till the Great Day comes, Mat. 8. 29.

Quest. These Private Judgments then are much short of the Last Judgment, because then is the Consummation of Reward and Punishment?

Ans. Yes. And also, because that Judgment shall be Solemn and Publick, in full Audience and open Court, before Angels and all the World, Luk. 12. 8, 9. and General, whereat all, both Angels and Men, shall be Convened and Tried.

Quest. And must not this be, till the End of the World?

Ans. No; for it is Christ's last Act in Discharging his Mediator Office, and therefore must not be concluded, till all things are at an End. All the time before the Judgment, is a State of Trial, for proving Persons; wherein Christ gives Laws to direct us, and sufficient Opportunities, and inward Grace, to help us to perform them. But all the Time after it, is a State of irreversible Recompences, in sharing and dispensing promised Rewards, and Penal Executions. After the last Sentence is once pass'd, there is no more place for Intercessions, and making Friends; but a New and Unalterable State, of Eternal Joys or Miseries, commences. And thus Christ, having consummated his Trust as Mediator, will surrender up his Power, and deliver the Kingdom to God the Father, 1 Cor. 15. 24.

Quest. The General Judgment, you say, is at the End of the World: Has God decreed a set Time, and fixed a Day for it?

Ans. Yes; he hath appointed a Day, in which he will judge the World in Righteousness, Act. 17. 31. Which Day is called the coming of Christ, 1 Cor. 15. 23. and the Day of the Lord, 1 Thess. 5. 2. & 2 Thess. 2. 2.

Quest. If every Mans Case must then be fully scann'd, and all Actions inquired into, and Pleas heard; methinks, that should be more than one Days Work?

Ans. So I suppose it will, the continuance perhaps of a thousand Days, nay, it may be, of a great number of Years. For Day, in Scripture, is any Continuance of Time, which is allotted for any Business. As the Time

of *Israels forty Years Travel in the Wilderness*, is call'd the *Day of Temptation*, Heb. 3. 8, 9. and the *Time of God's scourging and correcting*, the *Day of Visitation*, Isa. 10. 3. & 1 Pet. 2. 12. and the *Time of the Gospel*, is the *Day of Salvation*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. And so the *Day of Judgment*, is not the Space of twenty four Hours, but all that Time which *Christ* shall spend upon it.

Quest. It seems, God has fix'd the Day within himself; but is that determinate Day known to any besides himself?

Ans. No: For of that determinate Day knoweth no Man, no not the Angels in Heaven, nor the Son himself as Man, but the Father only, Mat. 24. 36. Mar. 13. 32. It shall surprise the World, and its coming shall be sudden and unexpected, as a Thief in the Night, or as Travel upon a Woman with Child, 1 Thel. 5. 2, 3.

Quest. Who shall be the Judge at that Great Day, by whom all Men shall be tried, and sentenced?

Ans. *Jesus Christ.* For God will judge the World in Righteousness, by that Man whom he hath ordain'd; and he hath assured them of it, by raising him from the dead, Acts 17. 31. He only is able to discharge this transcendent Trust, having an Authority Paramount, which none can question, or appeal from; an Infinite Understanding, that can search the Hearts, and discover the naked Truth of every Mans Case, and the just Validity of their Pleas; an incorruptible Integrity, that cannot in the least be byass'd by any Flatteries, Offers, Intercessions, or Intreaties; and an Almighty Power, that can reward the greatest Services, and punish the most high and haughty, as well as the meanest Criminals. And as he alone is qualified to Discharge it, so is he also to sustain the Honour of it. For who is fit to sit as Judge of Princes and Potentates, Men and Angels; but he, who made and governs them, who is over all in Power, and next in Dignity to the Father, even the Son of God himself. All Judgment is committed to the Son, that all should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. John 5. 22, 23.

Quest. Who, at that Day, are to be judged?

Ans. All Men, that shall either be found alive at his coming, or were dead before. For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive

for the things done in the Body, 2 Cor. 5. 10. yea, and the lost Angels too ; for know you not that we shall judge Angels ? i. e. fit with Christ, and approve of his Sentence, when he condemns them ? 1 Cor. 6. 3.

Quest. What Proof will there be of Crimes, and who shall be the Witnesses ?

Ans. The Devils are the accusers of the Brethren, Rev. 12. 10. and they will call for Justice : But there needs no Testimony at that Day, from the Father of Lies ; for God, in his Omniscience, keeps a Register and Record of all Mens Actions, and that Book shall be opened, and the Dead shall be judged by that unerring Book of his Remembrance, Rev. 20. 12. Nay, indeed, there is no need of any Witnesses at all, because the Guilty shall confess their Crimes, and bear witness against themselves : Their Consciences shall bear witness, and their own Thoughts accuse, or excuse one another, in the Day when God shall judge the Secrets of Men, by Jesus Christ, according to my Gospel, Rom. 2. 15, 16.

Quest. Shall all this be acted in great Solemnity, with Pomp and Splendour ?

Ans. Yes, as much as may be. For Christ will translate his Royal Court from Heaven to Earth, and come from the Right-hand of that Glory, by which he now sits in peerless Splendor and Majesty, having all the Holy Angels glittering in their utmost Brightness, to attend this Triumph. He shall come in his own Glory, and in his Fathers, and of all the Holy Angels, Luke 9. 26. & Mat. 25. 31. He shall descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Arch-angel, and the Trump of God, 1 Thes. 4. 16. And when that sounds, all that are in the Graves shall bear his Voice, and shall come forth, John 5. 28, 29. and there shall be a Resurrection both of the Just and Unjust, Acts 24. 15. All these shall stand before his Throne : And, after an exact Scrutiny, and fair Trial of all Persons, he will separate them one from another, into two Companies, as a Shepherd divides the Sheep from the Goats ; and as the Jews were wont to do in their Courts, setting such as were to be Absolved, together upon the Right ; and such as were to be Condemn'd, upon the Left-hand of their Tribunals : And then, with great Solemnity, pass Sentence ; bidding the Righteous, Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you :

you : But saying to the *Wicked, Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire*, Mat. 25. 31, 32, 34, 41.

Quest. Where shall this Glorious Appearance be ?

Ans. *In the Air*, saith St. Paul, 1 Theſ. 4. 17. *In the Clouds of Heaven*, ſays our Saviour, Mat. 26. 64. Somewhere it will be near the Earth ; but in what particular Part, it little concerns us to inquire, or advantages us to underſtand.

Quest. When this Great Judge has paſſed Sentence, ſhall all Parties concern'd acquieſce in it ?

Ans. Yes ; he is the laſt Judge, from whom there can be no Appeal. And there will be no need of any : For all ſhall acknowledge the Perfect and irreprehenſible Juſtice of what he determines. The Righteous, being judg'd firſt, and call'd up to ſurround him in Glorious Circles whilſt he paſſes Sentence on the reſt, ſhall approve and praiſe his Juſtice. *The Saints ſhall judge the World, i. e.* as his Aſſeſſors, and the Comprobatours of his Judgment, 1 Cor. 6. 2, 3. And the Mouth of all the Wicked, who ſuffer under it, ſhall be ſtopped, and they ſhall be convinced of it within themſelves. *For he will then convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all the hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him,* Jude 15.

Quest. For what ſhall we be judged, and condemned in this Judgment ?

Ans. For all *Transgreſſions of the Laws of his Goſpel*, and for thoſe only. He will not judge Arbitrarily, or condemn any for unforbidden Things, or for no Cauſe, but only becauſe he pleaſes : But the *Laws of his Goſpel* are the Rule, which he will try, and judge all Chriſtians by. *God ſhall judge Men by Jeſus Chriſt, according to my Goſpel*, Rom. 2. 16. and the *Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge Men at the laſt Day*, John 12. 48.

Quest. If we ſhall be condemn'd only by God's Laws, then to be ſure unforbidden Things, which are not threatned in the Word of God, and which there is no Law againſt, will never condemn any ?

Ans. Moſt certainly they will not ; and there is no Sin in them to be condemned. For *where there is no Law, there is no Transgreſſion*, Rom. 4. 15. And *whoſoever com-*

mits Sin, transgresses also the Law; for Sin is the Transgression of the Law; 1 John 3. 4. And Sin is not imputed, when there is no Law, Rom. 5. 13. So that it is a vain Fear, either in Religion, or in Common Life, when Mens Consciences scruple Things, which they confess to be indifferent, i. e. forbid by no Laws; as using a Form of Prayers, Kneeling, Standing or other Rites and Ceremonies no where forbidden in the Worship of God. In the last Judgment, they shall answer only for the Breach of Laws, and therefore are sure not to endanger their Souls, or become accountable for such as these, since there is no Law against them.

Quest. You say Men shall be judged for all their Transgressions of God's Laws; then, to be sure, for all their Sinful Actions?

Ans. Yes: For we must all appear before the Judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive according to that he hath done in the Body, whether it be good, or bad, 2 Cor. 5. 10. And the Dead are judged every Man according to their Works, Rev. 20. 13.

Quest. So that then we must answer for all the Actions of our Lives, and receive Reward if they have been good, or Punishment if they have been ill ones?

Ans. Yes,

Quest. The Actions of Men are quickly done, and when they are over, they are wont to think there is an end of them: But do not the good or ill Effects of several survive, and last long, and make for a great while after, as if the Action were still a doing?

Ans. Yes, they do, both in good and bad Actions. So that Men may be sinning, and serving God, not only whilst they live, but when they are in their Graves.

Quest. I pray you instance to me, how it is so in good Actions?

Ans. If a Man gains Profelytes to God, this good Fruit will last, and they will serve him when he is dead. If he promotes Pious Truths, or gives good Advice, or shews an holy Example in this World; the Truths may be remembered, and the Advice followed, and the Example copied out and imitated, when he is gone out of it. If he endows Churches, or builds Hospitals, or the like; his Piety will be Active when he is at Rest, and he may be doing

doing Good to the Worlds End. Of these, and all such Good Works of permanent Effects, it may be said, as St. Paul did of *Abel's Faith*, whereto God gave witness, that by it, he being dead, yet speaketh, Heb. 11. 4.

Quest. And is it thus also in bad Actions ?

Ans. Yes. For thus the wicked Opinions which a Man broaches, may infect after-Ages ; or, his corrupt Example, or Advice, may live in his Posterity and Acquaintance. Or, if he corrupt and seduce others into any Sins, they may persist in them, after he is reclaimed from them. But then he will sin most of all in his Grave, if he has introduced wicked and irreligious Laws and Customs, which are hardly altered, even where there is the plainest, and greatest Reason for it ; or abused the Laws, to possess himself of other Mens Rights, which derives down the Crime and Curse of detaining ill-gotten Goods, on all his Posterity ; or writ Pestilential Books ; or establish'd any ungodly or injurious Thing, the Mischief whereof no one knows when it may determine.

Quest. And when God comes to judge us, will he take notice, and have respect to these continued and multiplied Effects of our Actions ?

Ans. 'Tis just he should, they being all imputable to us, and reasonable to believe he will. For *Jeroboam* is taxed for sinning long after he was dead, because other Mens Sins were owing to him, he having establish'd Iniquity by a Law, and formed an Idolatrous Schism, and made *Israel* to sin, 2 Kings 10. 29. And to this, I suppose, we may, in part at least, ascribe the Trouble and Concern of Ghosts, and their sometimes appearing to make Satisfaction, after any great Injuries have been done, and not repaired in their Life-time : Which may shew, not only God's Care, in doing Justice ; but their own, in lessening their Account too. On which Inducement, I believe, *Dives* was solicitous to have his Brethren advertised of the Place of Torment, by one sent from the other World, Luke 16. 27, 28. For he being the Head of his Family, and a vicious Man, might have done much in corrupting his Kindred and Acquaintance, that resorted to him. And they being made the worse by his Example and Influence ; the Growth of their Guilt, and Fructification of the ill Seed he had sown, would accumulate

† 1 Kings
15. 29, 30,
34. &
2 Kings
17. 21.

mulate and increase his Sufferings. Which Principle of *Self-Love*, I take to be a better Reason of that Care of his, than any Charity for others, for which we have cause to think there is no Room in that Place. For *God is Love, and he that dwells in Love, dwells in God*; which certainly they do not, who are excluded from his Presence into that State of Torment, 1 *John* 4. 16. And this should make all Men careful how they broach any ill Opinions, or give others any evil Example or Advice: But especially, how they introduce, or revive, or any ways support Irreligious Customs, or enrich themselves and Families by Injustice, or establish any Wickedness, lest thereby they sin in their Graves, and have Power to offend God, when they have no Power to serve him; and continue daily adding Sin to Sin, when they can no longer repent of them. And, on the other hand, it should as much encourage them in any good and useful Deeds; whose Effects, when they spread beyond their Expectations, or last beyond their Times, they may reasonably hope that God, who is more ready to reward than he is to punish, will impute to them.

Quest. I see at the last Day Men shall be judged for the Actions of their Lives: But shall they be judged not only for their more Open and Publick, but also for their most Secret Deeds, that were committed under Concealment, and in the Dark?

Ans. Yes; for *God shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every Secret Thing, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil*, Eccl. 12. 14. And therefore all Men are infinitely concern'd, not to commit any Wickedness under the fancied Security of Privacy, or act shamefully even in the Dark; since all those Secret Works shall then be exposed to Publick View, and they shall be put to shame, and condemned for them, before Angels and Men, all looking on.

Quest. This is most terrible to all impenitent Sinners, who will then be punish'd for these Sins. But is it not discouraging to the Righteous too, who have repented of them, and are forgiven? For their Secret Sins, which cost them so much Sorrow here, will then renew their Grief, and put them to an open Shame, if there must be such Publick Mention and Exposure of them?

Ans.

Ans. No ; they are in no danger of any more trouble from them : For when they are brought to light, as *Solomon* says, *God will bring every Work into Judgment, whether it be good or bad*, Eccl. 12. 14. that shall be only to set off the Impartiality of this Scrutiny, and the Riches of God's pardoning Mercy ; but they shall not be upbraided with them, or lessen'd in the esteem, either of Glorified Angels, or of Men. For as God himself doth, so do they esteem of Penitents, as if they had always lived innocent ; and when once they have left them, forget all their former Offences, as if they had never been done. So that as to all real Effects, of their suffering from them, either in their own Persons, or in the Estimation of others, the Sins of the Righteous at that Day, are as if they were not mention'd, but conceal'd. And this will make out those Expressions of the Scriptures, which speak of the † *Lord's not imputing Sin to them*; and, † *of their Sins being cover'd*; and of * *God's remembering their Sins and Iniquities no more*. They will not be mention'd so as to make them either afraid, or ashamed ; which is as good as if they were wholly hid, and never mention'd at all.

† Rom. 4.
7, 8.
* Heb. 8.
12.

Quest. Among the Deeds of Men, all those are not really Good, which are so in outward Appearance, and which the World takes for such ?

Ans. No : Several good Actions, Hypocritical Men put on only in Disguise. As the *Pharisee* seemed to be devout in *making long Prayers*, when that was not to serve God, but to get Trust among Men, that he might be able to devour *Widows Houses* without suspicion, Mat. 23. 14. And when the *Precious Ointment* was poured on *Christ's Head*, *Judas* pretended great Care of the Poor, and tried out of the Waste on that pretence ; when, in truth, that which made him speak, was not his Charity, but his Covetousness, John 12. 5, 6. *Absalom* pretends the Payment of a Vow in *Hebron* ; but the Design was to execute a fore-laid Rebellion, 2 Sam. 15. 7, 10. Many Men pretend Kindness, only for Self ends ; Religion, for Secular Interests ; the Publick Good, when they only seek to satisfy their own By-ends, or private Resentments.

Quest.

Ans.

Quest. But when under this Hypocritical Mask, Men commit ill Deeds under fair Colours, will *Christ* at that Day bring this Hypocrisie to Light, and condemn these Actions, which the Authors justified to the World by these Pretences?

Ans. Yes: For when the Lord cometh, he will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the Counsels of the Hearts, 1 Cor. 4. 5. He shall be of quick Understanding, in the Fear of the Lord, and shall not judge after the sight of his Eyes, nor reprove after the bearing of his Ears; i. e. barely from outward Appearances; but with Righteousness shall he judge the Poor, and reprove with Equity even the Meek upon Earth, where they are Trespasgers, *Isa.* 11. 3, 4. And therefore it nearly concerns us to be sincere in all the Goodness which we make shew of, and to be the same to God, as we appear to be to Men: For if we dissemble in any thing, he will pluck off the Disguise, and shew us openly to be Hypocritical Pretenders, and disguised Sinners to all the World.

Quest. I see we shall be judged then for all our sinful Actions. But shall we be judged too, for all our sinful Omissions?

Ans. Yes; for we are as much bound to do what God enjoyns, as to forbear doing what he forbids: and at that Day, he will call us to an account for both. Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, for in my poor Members, I felt Hunger, and ye gave me no Meat; I was Thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink; a Stranger, and ye took me not in; Naked, and ye Cloathed me not; Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not. All which are omissions of Duty, and for them they are Sentenced, *Mat.* 25. 41, 42, 43.

Quest. I perceive we shall be sentenced for neglecting to fulfill Laws. But will Judgment also pass upon us, for neglecting to employ, or improve our Talents?

Ans. Yes; for the Lord orders the unprofitable Servant, who had boarded up his Talent, and made no gain therewith, to be cast into utter Darkness, *Mat.* 25. 30. And therefore it concerns all men, to whom God has given Leisure, or Power, or Wealth, or Cre-

dit

dit, or Wit and Parts to look upon all these as Trusts; and not to squander them away on Vice, or Vanities, Sports and Pastimes; but, as Wise and Faithful Stewards, to employ them all for God's service, remembering that all these were committed to them for their Master's use; and that at the last Day, they shall be called to give an account how they have spent them.

Quest. What say you to our words, shall we be judged at the last Day for them too?

Ans. Yes; for *by thy words thou shalt be Justified, and by thy words thou shalt be Condemned*, Mar. 12. 37. And this should make all men careful to Govern their Tongues, since, they must give so strict an account for the abuse of them.

Quest. Christ there says, *Men shall give an account in the Day of Judgment, for every idle word*, v. 26. what then will become of most men in this world? For is not any man, that Discourses with freedom, liable to utter something that is Idle, that is, which works no good, or makes none the better for it?

Ans. By Idle word there, is to be understood every False and Slanderous word, such as the Jews had then cast out against him, when they said *he wrought Miracles through Belzebub*, v. 14.

Quest. But in this strict Judgment, for all our sinful Actions, and sinful Words, will there be any account still further required, for our inward Thoughts and Desires of ill, which were never come to act?

Ans. Yes; for at that Day, *God will Judge the Secrets of men*, Rom. 2. 16. And *when the Lord comes to Judgment, he will make manifest the Counsels of the Heart*, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Quest. But is not every man troubled, more or less, with ill Thoughts, and unlawful Desires, and like to be so, whilst we bear these Bodies about us?

Ans. Yes; for in the Regenerate themselves, *the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 17.

Quest. How then can any man stand in the Judgment, if for these they shall be Condemned?

Ans. If the bare sudden Thoughts and Desires were Damnable, they could not. But that, for which God will then Condemn men, is not all stirring of them, but only

only all yielding to fulfill them. Make no Provision for the Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof, Rom. 13. 14. And this the Righteous do not commit, or when they do, before their Death they Repent of it, and amend it.

Quest. What will be judged yielding to fulfill them?

Ans. 1. All inward Consent to the fulfilling of them in our hearts, tho, it may be, we cannot do it for want of opportunity. For, when Lust has thus Conceiv'd, it bringeth forth Sin, Jam. 1. 15. And, our Saviour says, *Adultery may be committed in the Heart*, Mat. 5. 28.

2. All Contrivance for the acting and Fulfilling of them, after we have consented to them. He that Deviseth to do evil, shall be called, and dealt with as a mischievous Person, Prov. 24. 8. And evil Thoughts, that is, Murderous Machinations and Contrivances, are ranked in Guilt and Punishment with Murderers themselves, Mat. 15. 19.

3. All Actual accomplishment of them, in Deed and Practice; which is, fulfilling the Lusts of the Flesh, Gal. 5. 16. And this is more provoking still, if it be in a settled Custom, and constant Tenor of action, which is walking or living after the Flesh, Rom. 8. 1. 4. 13.

Quest. I perceive then, when Christ comes to Judgment, we shall all be called to Account, for all the sinful Deeds we have done, and for all the sinful Words we have spoken, and for all the evil Thoughts or Desires which we have consented, or endeavoured to fulfill; and Condemned for them, unless we have sincerely repented of the same.

Ans. Yes.

Quest. But how will Christ proceed in Judging us for these Things? Will he pass Sentence impartially, without respect of Persons?

Ans. Yes. All that are equal in Guilt, shall be sure to have equal Punishment. For the Judge is not capable of being Byass'd, by Fear or Favour, by any Fondness or Indulgence towards any Criminals, by any of their Flatteries or Complements, Gifts or Services, their Crafty insinuations, or tiresome importunities, by their Kindred or Families, Sects and Opinions. But

abso-

absolutely setting aside all by-Respects, he will regard only the Merit of Causes, and what doth really influence the Case, and Sentence every Man according to the Evidence that lyes against him. At that *Revelation of his Righteous Judgment*, there is no Respect of Persons with God. They that have sinned without Law, shall Perish without Law; and as many as have sinned under the Law, shall be Judged by the Law. God will render to every man, according to his Deeds; Eternal Life, to those that have continued in well-doing; but Wrath, and Anguish, on every Soul that doth evil, whether Jew, or Gentile, Rom. 2. 5. to v. 13. God without respect of Persons, judges as every Mans work shall be, 1 Pet. 1. 17.

Quest. But in judging upon all these Points, will Christ do it in Rigour, pressing all the Punctilio's, and taking all the Advantages of Law: or will he do it with *Equity and Candour*, as one plainly inclined to shew all reasonable favour?

Ans. He will be the most *Fair, Equitable, and Candid Judge*, our Hearts can wish for. He is our Judge who is our *Advocate*, and has all along espoused our Cause: our *Friend*, that Loved us better than his Life, and shed his Blood for us. So that when we are brought before him, we may promise our selves all the Favour that is consistent with Justice.

Quest. Will he favourably interpret our Performances when they come before him, and make the best of every thing, that it can justly bear, and be as ready to note what may make for us, as what may make against us?

Ans. Yes; for in the Description of the last Judgment, *Mat. 25.* he assigns good deeds to those on his right-hand, viz. the Feeding, and Cloathing, and Visiting him, which in strict Truth they had not done, having never seen him, but only by a favourable interpretation, from their having done so to his Brethren for his sake, which shews had they seen him in that want, they would much more have done it to himself. Come, ye Blessed of my Father, for I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat; thirsty, and ye gave me Drink, &c. And when they shall answer, Lord, when saw we thee, to do any of these things for thee? He tells us he will reply, in as much

much as ye have done it to the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me, v. 34. to 41. Thus likewise on the Disciples failing him at the most needful time, not watching with him one hour, when he was in Danger of his Life, and had expressly desired it of them: when he reproves the failure at the same Time he notes the excuse for it, and answers for them, when *they wist not what to answer* for themselves. *What, could ye not watch with me one Hour? the Spirit truly is ready but the Flesh is weak.* Mar. 14. 34, 37, 38. 40. and Mar. 26. 38, 40, 41. Nay, to assure us further of his extraordinary Favour, in Censuring of his Friends; behold his marvellous Candor, in judging of the worst Actions of his Enemies; and that too at a Time, when, if ever, he should have been prone to pass a hard Construction. For, representing the most Barbarous Murder of himself to God, as he hung upon the Cross, and had a most pungent sense of it, he imputes it to the most Pardonable Principles, and says, *they acted so through Ignorance* (the only possible thing that could be suggested for their excuse,) censuring that horrid Act, which he of all Men had cause to make the worst of, nor as an Accuser, but rather like a retain'd Advocate, Luk. 23. 34. Thus, *in that Day*, will the most benign Judge be of Counsel for all the Prisoners, and spy all their Virtues, and make the best he reasonably can of every bad Case. And, as for good Men, he will impute their Failures to the most pardonable Causes, and Remember their good Services when they had forgot them, setting them off by a kind interpretation, and thinking better of them, than their own Humility and Modesty would allow themselves to do.

Quest. But what say you to the seeming Rigor of his own Laws, which require us to † Love and serve him with all our Heart and strength? And if this be drawn out to a full stretch, and strained to mean our utmost Possibilities, no Candor to our Performances, can construe them to come up to this pitch.

Ans. The seeming Rigor of that Expression, he will interpret with great condescension to the Measure of Men. He will reasonably allow, and abate, for our many Temptations and Distracting Thoughts, our Natural Backwardness, and Forgetfulness, and other Frailties

† Deut. 6.
5. Mar. 22.
37.

ties so incident to our present State and Circumstances. And when all that is candidly deducted, the rest, which in our Circumstances we are honestly and fairly able to Do, will pass for serving him with all the heart and strength, according to the Commandment.

Quest. How will you make that out?

Ans. Because the *Scripture* Declares, that he will bear in Reason with our Infirmities, Heb. 5. 2. And because he has done so in several judged Cases, expressly declaring of several, that they have kept this Commandment, when they needed these abatements, Thus of *Asa* it is said, that *his Heart was Perfect before God*, 1 King 15. 14. And of *David*, that *he followed God with his whole Heart*: Yea, that *he turned not aside from any thing he commanded him, all his days, except in the matter of Uriah*. 1 King. 14. 8. and c. 15. 5. And of *Josiah*, that *he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, neither declining to the Right Hand, nor to the left*, 2 King. 22. 2. And of *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth*, that *they walked before God, in all the Ordinances of the Law, Blameless*, Luk. 1. 6. Now all these were Persons of our own Frailties, and Infirmities. They were defective in their Care, as we are; and, though they went beyond the pitch of others, yet they fell below the utmost of their possibilities, as the *Scriptures* have recorded of them, in † several instances. They served God, † 2 Chron. 16. ver. 1, indeed, *with all their Souls*, in one sense of the Precept, 10, 13. as that notes their *adhering only to his Worship*, and allowing no part of their Heart to any Idol God. But, 1 Sam. 21. as it notes the *intireness of Degrees* in serving him: 1, 2. Such failings, as were pardonable under humane Circumstances and infirmities, were first taken out, and 2 Sam. 19. 29. so much as they were able to do after that abatement, 2 Chron. 35. 21, 22. was judged their *serving God with all their Heart*, according to the Commandment. 23.

Quest. Will *Christ* then after he has thus made the most of their good Performances, make reasonable Allowances also for mens Slips and Failures, either in committing ill, or in omitting Good things?

Ans. Yes; when they fail in either, through some innocent, and well meant Error, or Ignorance: Or when they slip through pure haste and unadvisedness, and are surprized into some ill Thoughts, or sudden Passions, or

rash words, but correct themselves as soon as they consider what they have done, and do not continue in the same with Observation. He will then have Compassion on these, when he comes as our Judge; as now he has, when he acts as our Priest, and intercedes for us. For as the Jewish Priests had, so can he have compassion on the Ignorant, and Erroneous, or, as the † word notes, he can Suffer in moderation, or reasonably bear with them, Heb. 5. 2.

† μετενο-
μαζειν.

Quest. But what if men are Ignorant, because they neglect to learn their Duty, nay, perhaps stop their Eyes and Ears, and Refuse to see it, or to be told of it?

Ans. Then that will be no excuse to them, where they fail of performing it, they being, as St. Peter says, willingly Ignorant, 2 Pet. 3. 5.

Quest. I perceive he will shew Favour towards our involuntary Failures, But this will not avail us, if he be strict and Rigorous in judging of that Involuntariness. For, alas! what man doth all that is Possible, to prevent Ignorance, or Surprize? And if we do not all we can against them, he may say they come through our own wills and sufferance, if he will judge in Strictness. Will he therefore shew Candor, in judging any escapes to be Pitiabie, and unwill'd Miscarriages; without which all his Candor in other Things will not support us in his Presence?

Ans. Yes. He will shew all Reasonable Favour, in admitting Actions, for involuntary, that a Child could expect from a Wife and Tender Father, or that we experiment from one another. A marvellous Instance we have of his Proneness to make the best of ill Actions in ascribing his own Crucifixion, as I noted, to the Jews Ignorance, which seemed so liable to be imputed to Envy, Malice, and such other more inexcusable Principles. Thus benign he was upon the Cross, and he will be no less so when he appears in Court. He will only have more Glory and Power, not less Benignity and Candor there also.

Quest. Christ our Judge, it seems, will very graciously bear with our involuntary failings. But will he bear also with any wilful Sins, when we transgress Wittingly, or against our Consciences?

Ans.

Ans. No; for *whatever ill proceeds out of the Heart of man, defiles the man*, Mat. 15. 18. And tho innocent Ignorance plead some excuse; yet *when a man knows to do good, and doth it not, to him 'tis Sin*, Jam. 4. 17. But if they truly Repent of these, and amend them before their Déarth, they shall not be Condemned for them at that great Day.

Quest. O! how happy are we in this marvellous Clemency and Candor of our Judge, who will be so ready to make the most of our Good Deeds, and to connive at our ignorant and involuntary Failings, and to pass over all our wilful Sins themselves, upon our true Repentance.

But besides these ignorant and inconsiderate Failings, have we not many other *Natural Infirmities*, that will need his Clemency and Favour towards us?

Ans. Yes; the Natural Uncertainty of our Tempers; our Dulness in any Duties, more especially at some times; our Distractions and wandring Thoughts in Prayers; our Desires of Praise, and other indirect Aims, intruding too oft into our best Actions; our Natural Backwardness to Good; our Remissness and Faintness in performing it, and our being soon wearied therewith; our Weakness of Faith, in believing the unseen Things which God has promised; our great Adherence to Worldly and Sensible Things; and our Unaffectedness with Spiritual and Divine Objects, and the like. These are Infirmities incident to the best Men, and will cling to us more or less, as long as we bear these Bodies about us, and converse with the things of this World.

Quest. And will our Equitable and Benign Judge, shew favour to these infirmities, which are so inseparable from our Natures?

Ans. Yes. Were he only God, we might be more prone to fear, that he would look more at the just Demand of God's Laws, and be little *touch'd with our Infirmities*, which hinder us from fully answering them. But for this very end he took our Nature upon him, submitting to our infirmities, and conflicting with our Temptations, that having felt and experimented them in himself, he might be more feelingly tender, and Compassionate towards them in us. *He is such an*

*High-Priest, saith the Apostle, as is touched with the feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted as we are in all Points, tho' without Sin. Therefore let us come with Boldness to the Throne of Grace, Heb. 4. 15, 16. It be-
hoved him, says he again, to be made like unto his Bre-
thren in all things, that he might be, as Faithful to God,*

† Heb. 5. 2. *so merciful to us, and having been † Tempted himself, be the readier to Consider, and Succour our infirmities and Temptations, Heb. 2. 17, 18. This sense of our infirmities, makes him, now he acts in Heaven as our High-Priest, most compassionately to recommend them to God's mercy. And the same sense he will have of them, when he sits upon us as our Judge, and then we may be sure, he will Graciously Dispense that mercy towards them which before he interceded for.*

Quest. Besides these Natural infirmities, we are sorely kept back by many *supervening Disadvantages*. Particularly, by multiplicity of Business; which causes much distraction of Thoughts, and Haste in Dispatch, whence arise many Errors by the greatness of Temptations; as when we are hastily driven to do ill, through some great and sudden Terrours, or urgent necessities, to secure our Lives, or sustenance. And by our Bodily indispositions; as when sickness, or habitual Pain and uneasiness, or a continual succession of cross Accidents and Provocations, make us Peevish and impatient, or betray us into other rash miscarriages. And will our Candid favourable Judge, make abatements for these *Providential disadvantages*?

Ans. Yes; all just and reasonable abatements. He will exactly consider, and fairly and equitably allow for them *They that sinned without Law, saith S. Paul, shall be judged without Law, that is, with such abatements, as are allowable to those, who wanted the Law; not according to such stricter Terms, as are reasonably exacted of all, who enjoy'd it, Rom. 2. 12. The time of Heathen ignorance, saith he again, God winked at: expecting less from those, who had the great disadvantage of walking in the dark, Act. 17. 30. Where these disadvantages betray men into haste, and inadvertence, and a pitiable involuntariness, he will graciously connive at them, as he did at † St. Paul's undutifulness to Anania, upon a sudden provocation; and at Job's many*

† Act. 23.
2, 3, 5.

ny fretful expostulations, under a most uneasie Body, and heavy Afflictions. And where they bring guilt, by drawing us in to yield, and consent to those sins, whereto they expose us ; on their account he will exact the less, and such sins will be sooner expiated, and the Judge easilier satisfied, with a more moderate Repentance.

Quest. That which through the merits of *Christ*, must gain us acceptance, is our good deeds. But may not the best of us all find defects enow even in these ?

Ans. Yes. Our Zeal for God, is not all Flame, and inexhaustible activity, as *St. Paul's* was. We are not so prompt and forward in any act of Love to our dear Lord, as *St. Peter* ; so slow to Anger, as *Moses* ; so persevering in Patience, as *Job* ; so intirely affected with Divine Things, and formed after God's own Heart, as *David*. When we attain to be submissive under Crosses, perhaps we do not arrive, with any great affectionateness, to thank God for them : tho' we contentedly bear reproaches for *Christ*, yet, it may be, we cannot take pleasure in them, nor count Poverty for his sake, the truest Riches ; or Labour and Travel, an ease ; or Stripes and Imprisonments, a Triumph ; or the Cross, a Crown ; like the Holy *Apostles*. When we do God's Will, we are not so intent upon it, nor so sensibly delighted with it, as with our meat and drink, like our *Blessed Saviour*. We want that pitch of contempt for worldly things, and of command over our own Appetites ; that height of Abstinence and Self-denial ; that ease, delight, and watchfulness in Prayer ; that Assiduity and Pleasure in Divine Meditations ; that depth of Humility, and poverty of Spirit ; that fervour of Charity ; that promptness to shew kindnesses, and gladness in doing them ; that backwardness to admit of Provocation ; that easiness in forgetting, and remitting injuries, which some of God's Saints have happily enjoy'd, and for which they have been most highly Rewarded.

Quest. And will not this failure of Degrees in good things, need a like Indulgence from this compassionate and benign Judge ?

Ans. Yes, and find it too. For these heighths and eminent degrees of Virtue, he proposes to all, with more resplendant Crowns of Glory to recompence them, and noble examples that lead on to them ; but not as *indif-*

pensable Articles of Salvation. They are required as Things, which are hard for any to attain, praise worthy to attempt, and pardonable to miss of them. They are Gems, that adorn and set off; or Radiant Crowns, which surround the brightest Stars; but Stars they are still, which want these Glories.

Quest. By this, I perceive that there must be a great Latitude in virtuous attainments on the side of Bliss, and that *Christ* will not screw up all he saves to the same certain Standard of perfection, or require them all to be of the same size?

† Luke 10. 27. *Ans.* No; the Tenor of the Law it self, is only to obey God with † all our strength: but that strength is more in some, than it is in others. There are *weak*, as well as *strong*, among *Christ's* accepted Servants. And as different Magnitudes among the Glorified Saints, as there are among the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Stars*, in the Prophet †

† Dan. 12. 3. *Daniel's*, and St. † *Paul's*; or the different *Rooms* and *Mansions* of a Stately Palace, in our *Blessed* † *Lord's* resemblance.

† 1 Cor. 15. 41, 42. Nay, St. *Paul* could say, *he labour'd more abundantly than they all*, even among the *Blessed Apostles* † Joh. 14. 2. themselves, 1 Cor. 15. 10. Thus do very widely distant, and unequal virtues, all meet in the place of Bliss, and are each Beatified in their several Proportions. *He that soweth much, shall reap much; and he that soweth little shall reap little*, saith the *Apostle*, but both are to reap

† Ma. 25. 15. something, 2 Cor. 9. 6. And in the *Parable*, † according to their several Abilities, one Servant improved his Pound into ten Pounds, Luke 19. 16. another his, to five Pounds, v. 18. and a third, only doubled his, Mat. 25. 22. But yet all these were welcomed, with a *well done, thou Good and Faithful Servant*. And as he that gain'd Ten Pounds, had the Rule over ten Cities; and he who gain'd five, had Authority over five Cities: so he, that only doubled his Talents, was recompensed with a proportionable Reward, Luke 19. 17, 19. and Mat. 25. 22, 23.

Quest. I see *Christ* will not require us all, to be as tall in Spiritual Stature as *Apostles*, but will graciously accept of inferior virtues, and encourage them with proportionable Recompences. But what will you say, if even these small and slender things, are performed with much Difficulty and Reluctance? It may be, in the little good we

we do, we are not forward to catch at good motions, nor presently yield to a virtuous Discourse, or good Advice, but adhere a while to our own self-will, chiefly in cases against our own humour, inclinations, or former Opinions, though we do the thing at last, after some disputings with our selves. And will this gracious Judge accept of such slow, and backward services?

Ans. Yes; he that stood out at first, and said he would not go work in the Vineyard, but after he had better considered of it, repented, and went, is judged by our Saviour to be of the number of those, that do the will of his Father, Mat. 21. 29, 31. Easiness, and alacrity in closing with good, is a perfection of virtue, and shall receive a greater Recompence. But if we obey at all, though it be with Reluctance and Disputings, we shall be in the List of Servants, and not of Rebels, and receive rewards still, though in smaller Proportions. Albeit the Flesh lust against the Spirit, yet if we do not fulfill its Lusts, but the Spirit prevails, we walk in the Spirit, and are truly Regenerate, as St. Paul says, Gal. 5. 16, 17.

Quest. But, alas! the little good which we do, is not only thus defective in degrees, but is oft-times polluted by impure mixtures. When we do an act of honour to God, for instance, we are too apt, perhaps, to make it serve our own vanity more or less, and to seek thereby our own Praise. In censuring and reproving others Vices, it may be, in some degree, we gratifie our own peevishness, or other corrupt passions. And so in other Cases. And can we expect any reward at the hands of this Benign Judge, for such impure Services?

Ans. Yes, for the Good, (tho not for the Evil) Parts thereof, through his infinite mercy and goodness. He is so Candid, and inclined to make the most of what is good, that he is ready to overlook some compassionate and lesser ill, which is twisted with it; passing by the ill, when they are truly humbled and sorry for it; and not throwing away the good for the evil's sake. Thus in the mixt action of the Egyptian Midwives; he commends, and rewards their Pious Charity, and passes over their Officious falseness, Exod. 1. 19, 20, 21. And in

Rahab's case, he recompences her *Faith in the true God*, and *friendship for the Spies*, and winks at the insincerity of her *feign'd excuse*, Jam. 2. 25. and Josh. 2. 4, 5, 9. Yea, in censuring, not only the virtues, but the liberties of Men, when they are justifiable in the main, but culpable in some pitiable circumstance, he is apt to observe in the Action what may bear it out, and when they are duly humbled for the rest, to draw a vail over what may pitiaibly be connived at : as our Lord did in mentioning *David's eating of the Shew-bread*, vindicating him on account of that necessity which authorized, not censuring him on account of that falshood whereby he procured it, Mat. 12. 3, 4.

Quest. But is it not said, that if we *Pray*, or *give Alms*, or *Fast*, for the *Praise of Men*, we shall lose our reward, Mat. 6. 2, 5, 16.

Ans. Yes ; when the main design of our Prayers, or Alms, or other good Deeds, is to be commended, and we should not do them but in hopes of that. For in Acting Principally for commendations sake, we serve our own Pride and Vanity, but do not serve God. But when our chief aim therein, is to please God, he accepts a Good work, though some pitiable defect adhere, or some pardonable faultiness be unwarily let in and combined with it.

Quest. But in contemplating all this Indulgence of our Judge, we must not think that his favour will pass into fondness, which will bear with all we do, and spy no faults in us ?

† *μετριο-
της*.

Ans. No ; as he is a good and candid, so, as I noted before, is he a most Righteous and just Judge. What he will give to our *infirmities*, St. Paul calls † *moderate and reasonable allowance*, Heb. 5. 2. He bears in him the most exact temperament of Mercy, and Severity : being most prone to Mercy, in every compassionate Case ; and as inexorably bent on Justice, where 'tis reasonable, and fit to inflict Vengeance.

Quest. You have shewn me, that *Christ* will use all this Candor in constructions, and make these favourable Allowances when we are brought to his Bar upon our Tryals. Would he not have us in the mean time, to promise to our selves, and expect all this,

Ans

Ans. Yes ; or else considering the infirmities and defects of most, if not of all his Followers, we could never have any comfortable hope in him ; much less so great, as to desire, and *Pray for his Appearance*. And yet the *Apostles* give this, as the Character of good and acceptable Christians, who may therefore hope to be made happy, when they are qualified for it according to Humane measures. *The Crown of Righteousness is for me, and for all that love his appearing*, saith St. Paul, 2 Tim. 4. 8. *Look for, and, by your Prayers, haste on the coming of the great Day of God*, saith St. Peter, 2 Pet. 3. 12. *Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*, saith St. John, Rev. 22. 20. And in our daily Prayers, our Lord himself has taught us, every day to say, *thy Kingdom come*.

Quest. Are we not indebted for all this indulgence, to the merit of his Death ?

Ans. Yes ; for *we are accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have Redemption through his Blood*, Eph. 1. 6, 7. And owing all to him, we must both *Pray*, and *give thanks* for it *in his Name*, Joh. 14. 13. & Eph. 5. 20.

Quest. All these acts of favour, which you have recited, are marvellous instances of God's Clemency to all his faithful Servants ; and the Gospel, I see encourages us to expect them at his hands. But are we sure, that at that Day, God will stand to these Gospel Terms ?

Ans. Yes ; most sure. For he never repents of his promises, nor can deny himself. Besides, the same *Jesus*, who once came from God to make us these gracious offers, is then to come and Judge us according to them, and make good his own Proposals. Nay, since there may seem the same Reason, for his retaining them on to the consummation, as there was for his resuming them at the Resurrection, he may probably come, as some of the *Ancients* have thought, with the Glorious Scars of the Spear and Nails, and the signs of his Meritorious Wounds, which purchased all this Grace, about him. And then, as all the Wicked † *shall look on him* † Rev. 1. 7. *whom they have pierced*, with horror and consternation : So shall the Righteous, with unspeakable comfort, most joyfully beholding in his wounds, both the height of their most dear and compassionate Judge's Love, and the Price and assurance of their own Salvation.

Quest.

Quest. This indulgence of our Almighty Judge, will be an inexhaustible Fountain of ravishing joy and comfort, to all serious and considerate minds. And, indeed, without such clemency as you have described, the thoughts of the future judgment, must needs be a very melancholly consideration to the best Persons. But expecting so much Candor and Benignity from him, they have cause enough, not only to look for, but to love and desire his appearing. But what shall be the effect of all this to good Men?

Ans. They shall be sentenced to an Everlasting Life, and Rewarded with all the Glory and Happinels of an Eternal Kingdom. For having fairly, and impartially heard their Cause, and made all these Allowances, and found them Righteous, he will say to them, *Come ye Blessed Children of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the Beginning of the World, Mat. 25. 34.*

Quest. And in that Allotment, and Proportioning of Rewards, will he consider the Difficulties, and Oppositions in doing Good, which some Men meet withal above others?

Ans. Yes. As these Tryals and Temptations, are Proofs of a greater Love, they will in proportion be a Ground of a Greater Reward. Thus St. Paul says, the adding of Affliction to his Bonds, or Multiplying his Trouble in preaching of the Word, would surely turn to his greater Salvation in the End, *Phil. 1. 16, 19.*

Quest. Will he also consider the Costliness of it, as when 'tis done, with hazard, or Loss of their Friends or Estates, or, it may be, of their Lives?

Ans. Yes; one single Act under such hazards, may shew as much Religious Love and Zeal, as would suffice to great Numbers, when they are free from such incumbrances. When we obey God with present Damage, he will not only consider our Services, but our Losses in his Cause; and recompence abundantly, not only all we did, but likewise all we suffered for him. For every one that forsakes Houses, or Brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands, for my Name's sake, says our Saviour, shall receive therefore an hundred fold, *Mat. 19. 29.* And the Martyrs that were beheaded for the Witness of Jesus, shall rise first, and Reign with Christ, a thousand years; but the Rest of the Dead, not till the thousand years are finished, *Rev. 20. 4, 5.* And therefore whensoever God calls Men to suffer for Righteous-

nels,

ness, they must not look upon it as a Calamitous Scourge ; but as a Favour and Priviledge, such Suffering being sent, in Truth, as opportunities of accumulating Bliss, and securing to themselves, not only more ample, but, when their Sufferings proceed to Blood, more early shares of the Future Glories. *To you 'tis given, saith St. Paul, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake, Phil. 1. 29. Count it all joy, saith St. James, when you fall into diverse Temptations, Jam. 1. 2. When you are Reviled, and Slandered, and Persecuted for Righteousness sake, says our Saviour, then think your selves Blessed, and Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for your Reward in Heaven shall be great for it, Mat. 5. 10, 11, 12. As the Apostles did, who, when the Council had beaten them, departed from their Presence, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's Name, Acts 5. 40, 41. And the Hebrews, who took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, as knowing they had in Heaven a better and a more Durable Substance, Heb. 10. 34.*

Quest. But numbers. of the Evils which we endure, come not on us for keeping God's Commandments, but only as our share of that Misery and Trouble, which God has allotted for us in this Life. And will he at that Day Rate these, and consider any Persons having endured more Poverty, Oppression, Shame, or Sicknens in this World, than other good Persons, who yet are no better, nor Dearer to God, than themselves ?

Ans. I suppose he will ; for he is no Respector of Persons. And therefore when Persons of equal, or higher Goodness, through the present ordering of his Providence, want much of their Brethrens Temporal Encouragements, they may hope for a more Liberal share in a better place. For his extraordinary Measure of *Evil things*, in this present time, *Lazarus* had a proportionable surplussage of Good, in *Abraham's Bosom*, Luke 16. 24. *Blessed are ye that live in Poverty, and Hunger now, says our Saviour, for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.* Nothing thereby, such an ample Recompence for these present Evils in the next World, as would render them to all good Men, not the Miseries, as this World esteem them, but the truest Favours, and Gainful Blessings of their Lives, Luke 6. 20, 21. This seeming inequality of God's present Distributions, which
lies

lies upon Providence, will then be cleared up by a full and Liberal Amends. For *then, God's Righteousness in Judgment*, that in great part lay hid before, will be fully Revealed and made manifest, *Rom. 2. 5.*

Quest. But when he deals thus graciously with all the good, how will he proceed with *ill Men*?

Ans. In all the equity of a fair Tryal, but yet to a just Condemnation. When he bears with all Natural Infirmities, and reasonably abates for outward Impediments, and connives at involuntary Failings, and forgives all the sins of the Penitents; he will avenge the wilful Sins of all impenitent Persons, according to their Deserts. For *he will judge the World in Righteousness*, *Act. 17. 31.* To the wicked, he will say, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*, *Mat. 7. 23.* And when *they that have done Good, come forth to the Resurrection of Life; they that have done Evil, shall come to the Resurrection of Damnation*, *Joh. 5. 29.*

Quest. What Punishment shall these Miserable Men be condemned to?

Ans. All the Plagues of Hell, where their Spirits shall always be gnawed and preyed upon, by the Worm of Conscience; and their Bodies scorched with Fire and Flames. *Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels*, *Mat. 25. 41.* Yea, they shall have all the smart of Fire, where 'tis the hottest: being cast into a *Furnace of Fire*, *Mat. 13. 42.* and into a *Lake of Fire burning with Brimstone*, *Rev. 19. 20.* And there, as the Fire is not quenched, so their Worm of Conscience Dyeth not, *Mar. 9. 44.*

Quest. And when shall all these Dreadful Miseries seize them?

Ans. So soon as this Terrible Sentence, of *Go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*, is solemnly passed upon them. For his way of Effecting things, is by his Omnipotent Word. When he said, *let their be Light*, or *Earth*, immediately there was so at first, *Gen. 1. 3. 9.* And when he shall say, *go ye Cursed into everlasting Fire*, in obedience to that all-powerful Word, streight-way a Fire shall come forth from his Presence, and shall seize on the whole Earth, and Air, where his Adversaries Abode is, and set it all on fire about them, turning all this lower World, which probably thenceforwards

is to serve for no other use, into one intire Globe of Fire, or Flaming Furnace. The Fire that shall Torment and Scorch the Damned, at the coming of our Lord, shall burn up the Earth, and melt the Elements, and Crack the Heavens, making them dissolve, and pass away with a Great Noise, says St. Peter, 2 Pet. 3. 10, 12. The Heavens, and Earth that are now, says he again, are kept in store, and reserved unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of Ungodly Men; the Fire that shall break out from God upon the Ungodly, being, it seems, to seize and dissolve them. ver. 7. And the Fire that comes down from God, to devour and torment the Devil, and all he has deceived, Day and Night, for ever; shall make the Earth and Heavens that now is, flee away, as may seem from St. John, and leave nothing, but a devouring Hell, or a World of never Dying Fire and Flame, in its place Rev. 20. 9, 10, 11, 14. and c. 21. 1. And when once this is kindled, those forlorn Wretches may † cry in † Rev. 6. vain to the Hills to fall on them, and to the Rocks to cover 15. 16. them. For every Cave is then a Furnace, and every high Hill a Flaming Mountain: a Fervent Heat has melted all the World, and nothing is to be felt or seen, but boyling Element, and scorhing Fire all about them.

Quest. Oh! the wonder of God's Mercy, which shall then be displayed towards all his Saints, and the Terror of his Judgments, which shall then be inflicted on all incorrigible Offenders! Must not this expectation of *Christ's future Judgment* of us, for all our Actions, make us very careful how we lead our Lives?

Ans. Yes; it should do it above all things. We must account for all our Thoughts, Words and Actions. And an Eternity of highest Bliss, or Woe, depends upon the account we make. And therefore we had need to do all things here with such care, that when we are taken to task at that Great Day, we may give in a good and comfortable account of them. Seeing God will be most terrible in punishing all ungodly Sinners, what manner of Persons ought we to be, in all holy Conversation, and Godliness, 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12.

Quest. That day, you say, will surprize the World, as a Thief in the Night, and it is most uncertain to every Man

Man, when he shall be called to it. Ought not that to make us every day secure our Peace with God, and watch always to be in a readiness, and preparation for that great Account?

Ans. Yes; there is no room for preparation afterwards, if we are unprepared when he calls, as the Foolish Virgins experienced to their cost. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day, nor the Hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh, Mat. 25. 11, 12, 13.

Quest. Since Christ has reserved the judgment of all Men to himself, who best knows, and who alone is able unerringly to judge of them: Must not this make us wary, not to judge and censure one another?

Ans. Yes, by all means; for this Judgment he esteems an usurpation upon his Office. *Why dost thou judge thy Brother, or why dost thou set at naught thy Brother? We shall all stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, Rom. 14. 10. Who art thou that Judgest another Man's Servant? To his own Master he stands, or falls, ver. 4.* Nay, he tells us, as we have no Authority to do it, so we are unfit for it, because we cannot see each others Hearts; and so, in many Censures we pass, can have no true Judgment of Men, and Actions, as he has. Judge nothing before the Time, until the Lord come, who will bring to Light the hidden things of Darkness, and make manifest the Counsels of the Hearts, 1 Cor. 4. 5.

Quest. And since God will clear the Innocent, before Men and Angels, and in his judgment set all right at last: Is not this a support to us, under all the unjust Slanders, and wrongful Judgments, which we meet with here in this World?

Ans. Yes; for it shews that all will be fully wiped off, if we can have a little patience. Our Innocence shall shine the brighter, for the veil that was drawn before it, as the Sun doth when he recovers from a Cloud. For then God shall bring forth our Righteousness as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon-day, Psal. 37. 6. So that in such Cases, we may all say, as St. Paul, it is a very small thing with me, that I should be judged of Mans Judgment, because he that judgeth me is the Lord, who will shortly reverse all the Errors of Mens Censures, and shew them Publickly to all the World, 1 Cor. 4. 3, 4.

C H A P. V.

Of the Holy Ghost.

The Contents.

The Holy Ghost is God. What he hath done for our Salvation. Of his extraordinary Gifts bestowed on Apostles and Evangelists, which were for the Planting, and Propagating Christ's Religion. 1. The gift of inspiration, in Revelations. This bestowed upon the Apostles. These Revelations they have fully set down in the Holy Scriptures, after which we are not to look for any others. This Gift, of knowing Religion by immediate Revelation, necessary only in Apostles, and Evangelists. And design'd for the Infancy of the Church. Other Rules, whereby to examine new Lights and Revelations in Religion. As, try them by the Scriptures. Call for their Miracles, wherewith God still empower'd men, when he sent them to reveal new Things. No need of Miracles, when men pretend only to revive old, and acknowledged Revelations. If they shew Miracles, for things plainly against Scripture, they must work more, than were wrought to confirm the Scripture. An account of Joel, 2. 28, 29. Which seems to foretell the commonness of Revelations among Christians. The first Inspirations were not only in Doctrinal Points, but also in Devotions. And about Temporal matters. Subservient to this Gift of Revelations, was the Gift of discerning Spirits. This done afterwards by ordinary Rules. And the Gift of utterance and boldness. Their minds not influenced by this constantly, and at all Times. But ordinarily they were, and especially when they had most need of it. 2. Of the Gift of Miracles. Miracles a Proof of Divine Revelation. How discernible from Lying Wonders, by the Doctrines built on them. By their ends and usefulness, and being wrought on needful Occasions. Of the miraculous Gift of healing Diseases. This sometimes by anointing with Oyl. And Prayers. Of casting out Devils, and other Miracles. Of delivering to Satan, what it was, and why so call'd. Of Joy in

in Tribulations, and what was extraordinary in that of the Apostles. To the working these Miracles there was always required Faith in him that wrought them. And sometimes Faith in him that received them. 3. Of the Gift of Strange Tongues. The ends of this. And of the Gift of Interpreting such Strange Tongues. What is meant by the Holy Ghost being a Comforter. The Sin against the Holy Ghost, is a Sin against these extraordinary Gifts. Woe Blasphemy against him more irremissible, than against the Father or the Son. Extraordinary Gifts no mark of a justified State. Of Officers appointed by the Holy Ghost. Some of these Temporary, others to continue through all Times, the present Officers ordaining Successors. Of the Holy Ghost's ordinary Graces. By these we may know he dwells in us. Our care required towards these. Of Preventing Grace in outward advantages, and inward good motions. Directions how we are to endeavour after saving Graces, in six Particulars. How God gives them, though we are thus to acquire them. The Holy Ghost works also in us Spiritual Joys and Comforts. This he doth not in all the minds he sanctifies, because some are unfit for them through intrinsick impediments. But they are withheld from none, through his Arbitrary withdrawing, which some count Spiritual Desertion.

Quest. **W**HAT is the eighth Article of the Creed?

Ans. I believe in the Holy Ghost.

Quest. Do the Holy Scriptures speak of the Holy Ghost, not only as of a Power or Virtue, as some would define him, but as we are wont to do of a Person?

Ans. Yes, and that not only once or twice, out of their ordinary way of Speaking; Or, by way of Figure, on some particular occasion: as by the Figure called *Prosopopæa* or *Fiction of a Person*, any thing may now and then be spoken of, as if it were a Person. But in their common Tenor, and Natural Course of expression; and so as any of us would chuse to express ourselves, when we intend, and would be understood to speak of Persons. When he, the Spirit of Truth, is come, saith our Saviour, Jo. 16. 13. and he shall testifie of me. Jo. 15. 26. and he shall teach you all things, Jo. 14. 26.

Thur

Thus likewise, as a Person, things are said to be done *in his Name*. And this plain mark of Personality is ascribed to him, when he is put in Partnership with others, who are known and acknowledged to be Persons. And that too in matters wherein they are jointly dealt with-all as the transacting Parties, or as those free and Rational Agents, with whom we are making Covenants and Agreements, and to whom we are most solemnly ingaging our Religious Worship and Service. All which is manifest in *Baptism*, which is our entering into Covenant with God, and which is to be made in three joynt names, of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, Mat. 28. 19.

Moreover he is said to have assumed, a † *Bodily* and † *Luk. 3.26*
visible shape, wherein *John the Baptist* saw him † *descend* † *Joh. 1.*
like a Dove, and light, and remain upon our Saviour, at 32. 33.
his Baptism. Mat. 3. 16. And this, when he is spoken of as Distinct from the Father. For whilst *the Spirit* lighted in such *Bodily Shape*, and *abode upon him*, the Father at the same time spoke to them in *a voice from Heaven*, or out of a bright Cloud, and called him *his Beloved Son*, v. 17. and Mar. 1. 11. Luk. 3. 22. But now this Assumption of a Bodily Shape, cannot be said of mere Powers and Qualities, which instead of putting on Bodies or Bodily Appearances, when they are in them at all, subsist only by their being subjected in them, and supported by them. But it is very agreeable to the Persons of the Deity, which have sometimes assumed an *Humane Shape*, as the *Son of God* is concluded to have done in some Apparitions recorded in the *Old Testament*. But oftner, to have taken up some *visible Glory*, and *Bodily Appearance*, of *Light* or *Fire*, as the usual sign or symbol of their Presence: which Body of Light or visible Glory, the *Holy Ghost* also is reasonably thought to have made use of in this *visible descent* of his; a *great Light shining about the Place*, as the *Nazarene Gospel*, relates it, and *a Fire being lighted in Jordan*, as *Justin the Martyr* † testifies.

† *Dial. cum Tryph. p. 315.*

Besides he is reckoned as one of the *three*, i. e. of the three Persons, *which bear witness from Heaven*. 1 Joh. 5. 7. And the most Personal Actions, and Affections, such as show any others to be Persons, are ascribed to him, and that they are ordinarily and according to

the Current vein of Scripture expression. Such as being
 * Eph. 4. *grieved and vexed*, which are Passions competible only
 30. unto Persons. And as * *searching the deep things of God*,
 † Isa 63. *and revealing them unto us*; as † *teaching*, * *leading*,
 10. † *testifying*, * *reproving*; as *Conferring*, † *Gifts and Gra-*
 * 1 Cor. 2. *ces*, and * *Constituting Men in Offices*, making them
 10. *Bishops in the Church*, and the like: all which are acts
 † Jo. 15. of Personality, and are the clear and current Proofs
 26. thereof among our selves. Nay, he is represented as a
 c. 16. common Person; that is to transact matters, and pass
 13. between parties; who is † *sent out*, and that not from
 * Joh. 15. the *Father alone*, but both by the *Father and the Son*;
 26. who * *takes*, what he hears, and brings, *from both of*
 c. 16. 8. *them*; who † *bears*, and *receives* from one, and *speaks*
 † 1 Cor. 12. 4, 11. *and declares it to another*. None of which can be said
 * Act. 20. of mere Powers and Qualities, which can not go out of
 28. the Subjects whereto they do belong, nor belong to more
 † Joh. 15. Subjects than one, nor become Subjects themselves to
 25. other things to receive and carry them. And lastly, he
 * Jo. 16. is set out to us as one, who in these Personal actings
 14, 15. and Distributions which he makes, uses *Free will*, which
 v. 13. 14. is the surest sign that we can give of our selves, being
 Persons, and distinct from others. According as he is
 obey'd, or disobey'd he is either got, or lost. And gives
 his Gifts, or withholds them, to one more, and another
 less, as he pleases; *dividing to each Man severally as he*
will, 1 Cor. 12. 1.

Quest. And is he a Divine Person, or is the Holy
 † 1 Cor. 2. Ghost very God?

10, 11. *Ans.* Yes. For *Lying to the Holy Ghost*, is call'd *Lying*
 * Ps. 139. *to God*, Act. 5. 3, 4. And because *Christians* are the
 7. *Temple of the Holy Ghost*, they are said to be the *Tem-*
 † Heb. 9. *ple of God*, 1 Cor. 3. 16. And all the Properties of Di-
 14. vinity are ascribed to him; as, † *knowing all things*;
 * Gen. 1. 2. *ubiquity*, or * *Presence in all Places*; † *Eternity*, or du-
 Job 26. *ration through all Times*; * *Creating the World*; being
 13. *joyned with God*, who *will not* † *impart his Glory to ano-*
 † Isa. 42. *ther*, as an Object of *Faith and Worship*, in * *Baptism*,
 8. and 48. *and the* † *Apostolical Benediction*, and the like.

11. *Quest.* But if both the *Father and the Son*, and the
 * Mat. 28. *Holy Ghost* be God, are there not three Gods?

19. *Ans.* No: because *these three are One*, that is, one in
 † 2 Cor. *Nature*, or * *one Thing*, 1 Joh. 5. 7. There is a *Trinity*
 13, 14. of

of Persons. but these three are mysteriously united in Nature, and dependance; which makes but one God-head, not three Gods.

Quest. But why is he call'd *Holy*, more than the Father, or the Son? Since Holiness was reckoned one of the Divine attributes, are not all the three Persons, who are equally God, equal also in Holiness?

Ans. Yes. But though they are equally Holy, in Nature, or Essence: yet is he particularly styled so, in respect of his Operations. For as God the Father particularly undertook for the Creation of men; and God the Son, for the Redemption of them; so did God the Holy Ghost, for their Sanctification, being always ready to work holiness in those, who set themselves to fear God, and to serve our Lord Jesus Christ. *We are saved, by the renewal of the Holy Ghost, Tit. 3. 5, 6. And purified through the Spirit, 1 Pet. 1. 22.*

Quest. Why do we profess Faith, and trust in him?

Ans. Because we are to receive all our Graces and preparations for Eternal Glory, from him. For after Christ had Redeemed us with his Blood, and ascended into Heaven; the Rest, which was to be done further for our Salvation here on Earth, was left to the care of the Holy Spirit, whom Christ sent down as his substitute, to supply his absence, and minister whatsoever he left wanting to his Body, which is the Church, to perfect it in Faith and Holiness.

Quest. By this I perceive, that a great part of Christian Knowledge, lyes in understanding what the Holy Spirit has done, and what he is still to do for us. Pray what has he bestowed, for the effecting of this great work?

Ans. Gifts of two sorts. 1. Extraordinary, bestowed upon the Apostles and Evangelists, for the Planting and Establishing Christ's Church and Religion. 2. Ordinary, that are given in common to all others, for every particular man's Salvation.

Quest. What are his extraordinary Gifts bestowed upon the Holy Apostles, for the Planting and Establishing of Christ's Church and Religion?

Ans. They consist not only of Gifts, but likewise of Offices, which he is the Author of.

Quest. What are the *Extraordinary Gifts*, which he gave them to this end ?

Ans. I shall reduce them to *three*. The Gift of *Inspiration*, which revealed Christianity to themselves ; of *Miracles*, which enabled them to prove it undeniably unto others ; and of *Tongues*, whereby they could publish it over all the World, and be understood by Men of every Language.

Quest. When were these extraordinary Gifts bestowed ?

Ans. First, at the *Feast of Pentecost* upon the *Twelve*, when the *Spirit* descended on each of them, in the *shape* of *Cloven Tongues*, Acts 2. 3. And afterwards, generally upon others, at the imposition of their hands, as abundantly appears, from St. *Luke's* account of the *Acts* of the *Holy Apostles*.

Quest. And all these you say, were to enable them to Plant and Propagate their Religion ?

Ans. Yes ; for by these Gifts, which are call'd the *Promise of the Father*, Acts 1. 4. (that is, that *Spirit*, which *Christ* had promised to send them from the Father, John 15. 26.) the *Holy Ghost* was to act the Part of an *Advocate*, (as the † word *Paraclete* signifies, and is accordingly render'd, 1 John 2. 1.) which was to plead his Cause to the unbelieving World. For when this Comforter, or Advocate is come, saith our Lord, he will reprove, or convince, the world of these three Things. Of *Sin*, because they believe not on me, i. e. of the sinfulness of infidelity. Of *Righteousness*, because I go to the Father ; i. e. of my being a Righteous Person, and of God's owning me for such, though the *Jews* condemned me as a Malefactor. And of *Judgment*, because the Prince of this World is judged, i. e. of the downfall of *Idolatry* and *Demon-worship*, because the Devil is to be cast out of the Heathen Temples by this Almighty Advocate, and all his Oracles silenced, John 16. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Quest. The first of these Gifts bestowed upon the *Apostles*, you say was the Gift of *Inspiration*, which revealed *Christ's* Religion fully to themselves. Did the *Apostles* receive their Religion from God, and were they inspired by the *Holy Ghost* in what they Taught ?

Ans. Yes ; all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, 2 Tim. 3. 16. Thus God inspired *Moses*, and the
Holy

† παρα-
κλητος.

Holy Prophets of old : for no Prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation, nor came by the will of man, i. e. therein the Prophets did not speak their own sense, and reason : but *Holy men of God spake*, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1. 20, 21. And after the same manner, *Christ* promises the *Apostles*, that the *Holy Ghost* should teach them. *The Holy Ghost*, when he shall come, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you, John 14. 26. And when the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth, John 16. 13.

Quest. But had not *Christ* been their Teacher for several Years together ? and then what need was there for the *Holy Ghost* to come after him, for a further Instructor ?

Ans. *Christ* taught them by outward, and humane means, as one Man doth another. And in this way, though he took care abundantly to propose things to them, yet after all, they being Persons of slow and rustick understandings, were very liable to forget, or misconceive them : as 'tis plain they did the *Nature of his Kingdom*, the *Reasons of his Death*, and his *Resurrection*. But when the *Holy Ghost* came upon them, he inwardly enlightned their minds, and fill'd them with all variety of Heavenly Truth, bringing to their remembrance whatsoever *Christ* had said, and supplying whatsoever he designedly † omitted, till they were better able to bear † John 16. 12, 13. it. And though he did not teach them all things at once, they being ignorant for some time after his descent, of * the calling of the Gentiles : yet in a moment he made a * Acts 10. & Ch. 11. strange progress with them, and so far illuminated their minds, that immediately upon his coming down, they understand, and apply *Scriptures*, and expound *Prophecies*, and set up for Teachers of other Men, *Act.* 2.

Quest. And what knowledge they had of their Religion, you say was of his inspiring ?

Ans. Yes ; after once he took the conduct of them. Their way of knowing all things, as *St. John* told the Church in their Age, was by an unction from the Holy One, 1 John 2. 20, 27. And the Gospel which was Preached by me, saith *St. Paul*, is not after Men, i. e. of Mans devising. For I neither received it of Man, neither was I taught it, but by the Revelation of *Jesus Christ*, Gal. 1. 11, S 3 12. And

12. And of *all Holy Scripture*, it is declared, that it is given by inspiration of God, 2 Tim. 3. 16.

Quest. 'Tis plain, indeed, they say they are inspired, and taught of God. But have we any more than these Testimonies of Scripture, that is their own word and saying for it?

Ans. Yes, The Miracles which they wrought in confirmation of it. *They preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with Signs following,* Mar. 16. 20.

Quest. I perceive the Holy Ghost did reveal God's will to them, and in the Holy Scriptures they have revealed it unto us. But in those Scriptures, have they done it fully?

Ans. Yes; for in that *Epistle*, which St. Paul sent last to *Timothy*, before which, the greatest part of his other *Epistles*, and of the Gospel Canon was writ, he declares of *all the Scriptures* then extant, that they are able to make us wise unto Salvation, being Profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for instruction in Righteousness. That the Man of God may be Perfect, thoroughly furnished out of them unto all Good works, 2 Tim. 3. 15, 16, 17. Nay some single Books of Scripture, as the Particular Gospels, are full enough to this end. And accordingly St. Luke testifies of his Gospel, that it contains those Things, which all Christians most surely believed, and wherein Theophilus, an Excellent Person, and no way Defective in saving Knowledge, had been Principled and instructed, Luke 1. 1, 3, 4. and all that Jesus began to do and teach, till he was taken up, Acts 1. 1, 2. All necessary Christianity, was Faithfully preached by Jesus Christ, and they Faithfully set out his Life, and Preaching. And what St. Luke added afterwards, in the Acts of the Holy Apostles, was only an Historical Account of the Method they took, what they suffered, and how they succeeded in Preaching this Doctrine. And as for the Epistles of the several Apostles, which were accidentally, and occasionally writ, for the Emergent Benefit of the Churches, they either repeat and press the same Things, or Comment upon them in fuller Explications, or Determine some Controversies started in the Church about them, or confute some Unchristian Opinions and Heretical Corruptions of Gospel-Truths. as is obvious to any careful, and intelligent comparer of them. *Quest.*

Quest. Having therefore these *Scriptures* Faithfully conveyed to us, by God's Blessing, we must not look for, or listen to any *New Revelation*?

Ans. No, not of the Way to please God, and go to Heaven. *Christ*, our Great Prophet, who was to † Seal † Dan. 9. up *Vision and Prophecie*, having inspired his *Apostles*, and fully Revealed all these things to us once already by them, it is a vain thing to fancy he should do it over again.

Quest. The Gift of Inspiration then, or of having Religion immediately Revealed to them, was necessary only to *Apostles and Evangelists*, who were the first Publishers of it from God?

Ans. 'Tis very true. And accordingly, in Suiting the Gifts, and Ministries, reck'ned up, 1 Cor. 12. to the word of Wisdom, or Gospel Revelation, which is the First, and Chiefest in the List of Gifts, v. 8. St. Paul adapts the Order of *Apostles*, as its Correspondent, and the first and chiefest in the Number of *Ministries*, ver. 28. Inspiration of Religion was only to fit and qualifie them for that Office. Hence it is, probably, that it is by St. John called † their *Unction*, that is, I suppose, their investiture in their Office: For 'tis well known, the common way of investing Men in Offices, especially in the Priesthood, and Prophetick Office, was by anointing. And St. Paul infers his Authority in the *Apostolical Office*, from his inspiration, because his Gospel was not after Man, but he was sent out by God, and had it immediately Revealed to him by him, Gal. 1. 11, 12, 15, 16, 17. And the Promise, that the † Holy Ghost should teach them all things, and † John 14. * guide them into all Truth, was not made to any Christi- 26. an of succeeding Times, but particularly to the Holy A- * Jehn 16. postles, with whom it is our Blessed Lord there Discour- 13. les. And the *Unction among them*, whereby they knew all things, that St. * John speaks of, was whilst he himself * John 2. was alive, and other *Evangelists*; nor to add, moreover, 20, 17. that his Epistle seems writ among the latest of the Books of the New Testament. So that then, probably, they had among them the Inspirations of almost all the other *Apostles*.

Quest. So that inspiration of Religion was design'd only for the Infancy of the Church, whilst it was a Planting, and Religion a Publishing, but was to cease when that was done?

Ans. Yes ; it was so. *Knowledge, i. e.* inspired Knowledge, *Propheſie, and Tongues,* were fitted, as *St. Paul* notes, only for the *Child-hood of the Church*, for that is the Similitude which he uses, in expressing the transitoriness of these Gifts, *1 Cor. 13. 9. whilst I was a Child, I spake as a Child, I understood as a Child, &c.* But these Helps of the Infant State, were to vanish, as it took Root, and grew up to Man-hood. *When I became a Man, I put away Childish Things, v. 11.* We know, says he again, in part, and we propheſie in part : *i. e.* at present the Church is in its infant, imperfect State, and this Inspiration (which is one chief thing necessary to the Perfection thereof) is imperfect, this Epistle being one of the earliest Writ, and the *Scripture-Canon* at that Time not being finished, and generally come abroad. But when that which is perfect is come, *i. e.* as I conceive, not only the Perfection of the other World, but a more Perfect State of the present Church, when the Canon shall be consummated, and commonly given out, then that which is in part, shall be superseded and Done away, *v. 9, 10.* And for *Charity*, that bright Gem among saving Graces, it indeed never fails. But whether there be Propheſies, they shall fail ; whether there be Tongues they shall cease ; whether there be Knowledge, *i. e.* inspired Knowledge, it shall vanish away, *v. 8.*

Quest. In Christianity then, I see we must take up with the Holy Scriptures, and not look for new Revelations, except we would look also for a new Religion, and new Apostles ?

Ans. Very right.

Quest. This is enough against any Man, who pretends to new Lights and Revelations in Religion. But since there are many such in the World, can you give me any further Direction how to try them ?

Ans. Yes ; examine them First by the Scriptures, bringing those New Revelations to the Old, and then be sure, they are either inventions of Men, or Delusions of Satan, if they contradict it. Tho' we, or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have already preached unto you, and which is set forth in Scripture, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any, pretending never so much Revelation, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that

that you have received, let him be accursed, Gal. 1. 8, 9.

Quest. What other way would you direct me to, for the Tryal of such Pretenders ?

Ans. Secondly, call for their Signs, or Miracles, as God's Token, to manifest that he speaks by them. For when God sends Men on new Messages, and Revelations, to testify that they come from him, and to gain them credit, he empowers them to work Miracles, or give Signs, because else they would go upon vain Errands. Thus, when God sent *Moses* to the *Israelites*, and he objected, that they would disbelieve him, and say, God had not appeared unto him, *Exod. 4. 1.* God owns the reasonableness of the Objection, and impowers him to turn his Rod into a Serpent, and work other Signs from him, to gain Credit with them. Which he did, as he himself told *Moses*, that they may believe, that the Lord God of their Fathers hath appeared unto thee. And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee after the first sign, that they will believe thee after the latter sign. Or, if they disbelieve after that too, thou shalt work another sign, *ver. 5. to ver. 10.*

Quest. Have you any further Evidence of this ?

Ans. Yes ; in *Christ* himself. For without Miracles, he did not require all Men to believe him, when he came in God's Name ; and then sure, without them, they are not bound to believe any other pretender to new Revelation. If I had not done among them the Works which no other Man did, they had not had sin in disbelieving, *John 15. 24.*

Quest. And this was still the way of Prophets, when God sent them ?

Ans. Yes ; when he sent them to reveal any New Thing. Indeed, when Prophets came only to press old Revelations, that stood confirmed by former Miracles, they needed not always to come with a New Sign. And this was the case of many Ordinary Prophets among the Jews, whom God specially sent and stirred up, to inforce some neglected Precepts, and chiefly the Moral and Spiritual Parts of the Law of *Moses*. But when any pretended to any extraordinary Commission, for reversing of some Old, or setting up some New-Rule, or Doctrine, as it was reasonable to expect they should, they were always

always empowered to give a Sign, or work a Miracle, in Confirmation. And this is the Test God himself gives, whereby to know when he had sent any one. *If thou say in thine Heart, how shall we know the Word, which the Lord hath not spoken? When a Prophet speaketh in the Name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the Prophet hath spoken presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him, Deut. 18. 21, 22.*

Quest. So that no Prophet, pretending to New Revelation, was to be believed barely on his own word, till some sign from God gave witness to it?

Ans. No; the great Prophet of the Church, Jesus Christ himself, did not expect it. *If I bear Witness of my self, my Witness is not true, i. e. ought not to pass for true. But there is another that beareth Witness of me, for the Works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same Works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me, John 5. 31, 32, 36.* And this is necessary, to prevent our being deceived. For many false Prophets are gone out into the World, 1 John 4. 1. And these come all in God's Name, though what they declare, is not his Revelation, but their own invention, or some Satanical Delusion. And if we were to believe a Man inspired, barely upon his own Word, since they all say they are, we should believe them all. So that to prevent being deceived, we must not take a Man's own Word for his being sent thus of God, till he shews some Sign from him to attest it.

Quest. You say they are miraculously assisted, when they are sent to reveal any New thing. Is there not a like necessity of Signs and Miracles then, when they only come to Remove Corruptions, and revive such former acknowledged Revelations, as had Miracles to confirm them?

Ans. No; to Persons that own he spake it, Gods Word has as much Authority as his Work. Whilst they have his clear Word to shew for themselves, they are sufficiently qualified to use his Name, to reprove and convince, on the score and credit of ordinary Ministers, without producing any new and extraordinary Credentials. Besides, for these things, they may appeal to all the old Miracles wrought to testify these Revelations. And

acc ord-

acle, in
f gives
If thou
which the
in the
to pass
but the
e afraid

Reve
d, till

Jesus
s of my
als for
ne, for
he same
er bath

ry, to
ets are
e come
nor his
tanical
spired,
ey are,
ing de-
for his
n from

when
a like
y only
former
onfirm

Gods
ft they
ey are
e and
nisters,
edenti-
all the
And
ord-

Accordingly, a great part of the *old Prophets*, under the *Jewish State*, coming to reduce Men to the Obedience of *Moses*, to reprove sins, and to reform abuses, wrought no Miracles, it being enough for them to produce the *Holy Scriptures*, who only sought to bring those back to them, who had swerved from them. And this also was the Case of our *first Reformers*. They studied no new ways, but only endeavour'd to restore Religion, which was much depraved in these Parts of the World, to that Form, which was at first most miraculously confirmed by *Christ* and his *Apostles*. And therefore their Proofs were not to be fetched from Signs and Wonders, as Men that introduced new, and unattested Tenets, but from the *Holy Scriptures*.

Quest. But are we not told of * *False Prophets shewing Signs*, Mar. 24. 24 ? And what shall we say to them, if they alledge Miracles for false Things ? Rev. 13.
13, 14. &
16. 14.

Ans. If they teach things contrary to the Scriptures, they must not only work Miracles for their contrary Opinions, but more, and greater than were wrought by *Christ* and his *Apostles* to confirm the *Scriptures*. For here, all the Miracles wrought for the Scripture, are against them ; since their pretended Miracles, are brought for a contrary Thing. And when our Faith is solicited by a competition of Miracles, as the Faith of the Jews was, between the Miracles of *Moses* and those of the *Magicians*, Exod. 7. 11, 22. and when any *Seducer* give signs, to draw them to *Idolatry*, Deut. 13. 1, 2. we must believe that side, which has the greatest, and the most of them. And this will secure us against all the Errors and feign'd Miracles of new Lights and Pretenders. For 'tis certain, they will never shew the tenth part of those Miracles, to confute any Doctrine contain'd in Scripture, that *Christ* and his *Apostles* have done, to confirm it.

Quest. I confess, 'tis very clear from what you say, that the Scripture is the only Revelation which we must stick to ; and that in matters of Religion, we must notarken to any other Pretenders to new light and inspiration. But doth not the Prophet *Joel* say, Revelations should be common things among Christians ? I will pour out my Spirit in those days upon all Flesh, and your sons and Daughters shall Prophesie ; your young men shall see

see Visions, and your old men shall dream Dreams, Joel 2. 28, 29.

Ans. Yes; but by *those days*, he means not all the days of Christianity, but only the *days of the Apostles*, when such Revelations were common Things. For in those same days, as it follows in *Joel*, *I will shew Wonders in Heaven, and in Earth*, saith God, *Blood, and Fire, and Pillars of Smoak. And the Sun shall be turned into darkness, and the Moon into Blood, before the Great and Terrible day of the Lord come*, (i. e. before the destruction of Jerusalem, whereof our Saviour interprets this passage, *Mat.* 24. 29. which destruction fell out in the Apostolical Age, before the death of St. John,) *Joel* 2. 30, 31. And St. Peter says, these inspirations foretold by *Joel*, were fulfilled, when the Holy Ghost at Pentecost descended upon them. This is that which was spoken of by the Prophet *Joel*, it shall come to pass in the last days, *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall Prophesie*, &c. *Act.* 2. 16, 17, 18. So that *Joel's* Prophecy of inspirations doth not remain now to be fulfilled, but, as *Joel* himself foretold, and as St. Peter declared, was long since accomplished.

Quest. But God gave these Revelations in the Apostles Age, and is not he the same God still in ours?

Ans. Yes; he is always the same God, but he doth not always do the same things. He came down before the Jews, in Thunder and Fire upon Mount Sinai † once, but he did not do so in after-times. He shed abroad the Gift of Tongues, and Miracles, upon the generality of Christians in the Apostles days, but he has not done so in any others since. He is the same God, and has the same care and kindness for his Church, in all Times; but he doth not always work the same effects, but only according to our occasions and necessities. And immediate Revelation was necessary to the Apostles in their circumstances, and as unnecessary to us in ours.

Quest. Were these inspirations meerly about Doctrinal Things, and declaring the will of God, only in points of Faith, or manners?

Ans. No; but sometimes, in those days of Revelation, they were inspired also in their Devotions, with Prayers

† *Exod.*
19. 16, 18.

Prayers and Hymns, which was a blessing they were more sensible of in that Age, because as yet they had no formed and established Liturgies. Thus St. Paul tells the *Corinthians*, every one in their Assemblies had an inspired Psalm, as well as an inspired Doctrine, Praying and Praising, as well as Preaching by Revelation, 1 Cor. 14. 26. And when they spoke by the Gift of Tongues, it was oft in inspired Hymns and Devotions: for he that speaketh in an unknown Tongue, saith he, speaketh unto God, v. 2. he Prays to God, or Praises him in that strange Gift of the Spirit, v. 14, 15, 16. And in the Enthusiasms of Tongues, which fell on Cornelius and his Gentile Friends, they magnified God, Act. 10. 40.

Quest. Besides these Revelations about Religion, and the way to Happiness, had they not also Prophecy, or, Revelation about other Things?

Ans. Yes; they had Revelations of future events concerning either themselves their Friends, or the whole Church. Thus Agabus foretold the Famine, Acts 11. 28. and St. Paul's imprisonment at Jerusalem, Act. 21. 10, 11. And Paul foretold to his Company in the Ship, that they should all be saved, and none of them perish in the Ship-wrack, Act. 27. 22, 23, 24, &c. And St. John foretold, not only what was to befall particular Persons, but the whole Church in succeeding Ages, in his Book of the Revelations.

Quest. I remember you said, we are not now to expect any more Revelations in Religion, to shew us the way to please God, and go to Heaven. But do you suppose, that some may still be Prophets, and have Revelations about other things?

Ans. Perhaps they may, about Particular accidents to particular Persons, or Families; or about great Revolutions, to States, or Empires. As to these Matters, it is not for me to stint the kindness and care of God to determine what intimations he may sometimes vouchsafe from the other World. And if any wise, sober, and good men, by the forcibleness of the impression on their own minds, after the Prophetick way, which convinces and satisfies themselves, and by the correspondence of events, which may satisfy others, find they have any such thing, I shall not withstand them; and so long as they do not offer these, to innovate in Religion,

ligion, the Revelations of the *Scripture* are no bar against them.

Quest. You have fully explained this first miraculous Gift of the *Holy Ghost*, the Gift of *inspirations*. Were there are any other miraculous Gifts *subservient* to it, which you would explain to me under this Head?

Ans. Yes; *First* the Gift of *discerning Spirits*, i. e. among all the Pretenders to inspiration, who spoke true inspirations, and who meer pretences of it, or Satanical delusions. *We have received the Spirit of God*, saith St. Paul, *which reveals to us the Things of God*. And *he that is Spiritual judgeth all Things*, that are pretended by others; yet *he himself is judged of no man*, i. e. they who want his Spirit, cannot judge of him. For *who*, i. e. of those who want this Spirit, *bath known the mind of the Lord*, to discern when another meerly pretends to it? 1 Cor. 10. 12, 15, 16. And this Gift of Discerning Spirits, was very necessary in that Age, to warn the Church against False Prophets. For when there was such a commonness of true Revelations, it gave the greatest opportunity to Diabolical Enthusiasts, or wicked Impostors, to obtrude their inventions, or delusions upon the Church, hoping they should pass for inspirations among the crowd of others. Now are there many False Prophets gone out into the World, saith St. John, which makes it necessary not to believe every Spirit, 1 Joh. 4. 1.

Quest. This Gift indeed, was necessary to discover them, before the *Scriptures* were written: but when once they had them, could not any Christians thereby detect Impostors, without the Gift of discerning Spirits?

Ans. Yes; and so St. John, and the other Apostles in their *Epistles*, gave ordinary Rules for this purpose. One of these Rules was, confessing Christ to be come in the Flesh. Try the Spirits, says he, *whether they be of God: and hereby know ye the Spirit of God; every Spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God; and every one that denies it, is not of God*, 1 Joh. 4. 1, 2, 3, and 2 Joh. 7. Another Rule was, their submission to the Apostles, and Governours of the Church, since God would inspire no man to break Unity, and make needless Schisms. *We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that*

that is not of God, beareth not us : hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error, 1 Joh. 4. 6. But the most comprehensive Rule of all, was their agreement, or dissonancy with the Holy Scriptures, as I noted before, and the Revelations of the undoubted Apostles. If any man think himself to be a Prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the Things which I write unto you, are the Commandments of the Lord, 1 Cor. 14. 37. But if any Man, or Angel from Heaven, preach unto you any other Gospel, than that you have received already, let him be accursed, Gal. 1. 8, 9.

Quest. What other miraculous Gifts, besides this of Discerning Spirits, were subservient to this Gift of Inspirations ?

Ans. Secondly, the Gift of utterance, i. e. of assurance, fluency, and volubility of speech, whereby they were enabled to declare, and make known their Revelations to advantage. This St. Paul desired the Colossians, to beg of God for him ; Praying for us, that God would open to us a Door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak, Col. 4. 3, 4. Under which is comprehended that miraculous Boldness, which these poor men shew'd to admiration, in asserting undauntedly a most exploded Cause, in the face of their numerous and potent Adversaries. That utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the Gospel : that wherein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak, Eph. 6. 19, 20.

Quest. Was this miraculous Boldness, a Gift bestowed upon the Old Prophets ?

Ans. Yes ; it was a part of that Spirit of Fortitude which the Jewish Writers speak of, wherewith God armed a Prophet, before he sent him with a difficult and perilous Message, in which he might foresee the greatest terror, and dread of men to stop his Mouth. Thus God told Ezekiel, when he sent him to the impudent, and hard hearted Israelites. Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an Adamant, harder than Flint, have I made thy Fore-head : Fear them not, neither be dismayed at their Looks, though they be a rebellious House, Ezek. 3. 8, 9. Thus also he bid Jeremiah, speak,

Speak, and not be dismayed at their Faces; for he had that Day made him a defended City, an Iron Pillar, and Brazen Walls, against the whole Land, against the Kings of Judah, the Princes, the Priests, and the People thereof Jer. 1. 8, 17, 18, 19.

Quest. And did the Holy Ghost, give this miraculous Boldness to the Apostles?

Ans. Yes; in a wonderful measure. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with Boldness, *Act. 4. 31.* And when the Jewish Rulers saw the Boldness of Peter and John, asserting freely the Power and Authority of Jesus, and taxing them openly as his wicked Murderers, to their very Faces, they marvelled, *ver. 10, 11, 12, 13.*

Quest. Had they this boldness of Spirit at all times?

Ans. No. For at Corinth St. Paul says of himself, that he was with them in Weakness and Fear, and much Trembling, *1 Cor. 2. 3.* In some great Dangers, and pressing Necessities, their Natural Fears would return upon them, to trouble them for some time. Thus it sometimes happen'd to St. Paul, where he expected the most perillous opposition: for, after the hardships, and hazards which he had run through at † *Philippi*, and † *Thessalonica*, expecting the like at Corinth too, he was with them, as he says, in much trembling, and so discouraged, that he needed a Revelation to embolden him, *Act. 18. 1, 9, 10.* And thus it did especially, if at such time he were alone, and had not his Companions with him. When he came into Macedonia whilst he was by himself, his Flesh had no Rest, but he was troubled on every side, without were fightings, and within were fears. But as soon as his Coadjutor Titus came to him, he took heart, and God, who comforteth those who are cast down, comforted him by the coming of Titus, *2 Cor. 7. 5, 6.* And when he came to Troas, where a Door was opened to him, he had no Rest in his Spirit, because he found not Titus his Brother, as he expected, to stand by him, *2 Cor. 2. 12, 13.* And at Corinth, whilst he was alone, he was the more afraid; but when Silas and Timotheus were come, he was pressed in Spirit, i. e. vigorously put forward, and emboldened by their Presence, *Act. 18. 5.*

Quest.

Quest. By this I see that the *Apostles* were Men, and had some Returns of Humane Fears, and Infirmities, and that this miraculous boldness did not actuate and invigorate them at all times?

Ans. 'Tis true indeed. But ordinarily they enjoy'd it, and particularly at those very instants, when they had the greatest need thereof. As *St. Paul* did before *Nero*, where the Lord stood with him, and strengthened him, i. e. with a mind undaunted, 2 *Tim.* 4. 16, 17. And as *Peter* and *John* did before the *Sanhedrim*, where they were so bold that the Rulers marvelled, *Act.* 4. 6, 7, 8, 10, 13. And as *Christ* promised they should all do, when they were brought before *Governours*, and *Kings*, for his sake. For then, says he, take no thought beforehand, how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same Hour, what ye shall speak, i. e. both matter, and Presence of Mind to utter it, For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you, *Mat.* 10. 18, 19, 20.

Quest. What is the second of those Extraordinary Gifts, which the Holy Ghost bestowed upon the *Apostles*, for the Planting and establishing of *Christ's* Church and Religion?

Ans. The Gift of *Miracles*, which enabled them to prove those things undeniably unto others, which God had revealed to themselves.

Quest. Is working a Miracle for any Doctrine, a Proof that it comes from God?

Ans. Yes, if the Doctrine tends to Holiness, and be worthy of God. For a Miracle, is not the work of Man, but of God, and shews that God stands on his side that works it. So that Miracles are God's Witness, and way of proving Things. The works that I do in my Father's Name, bear witness of me, *Joh.* 10. 24, 25. If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But If I do, though you believe not me, believe the Works, ver. 37, 38. And God bore the *Apostles* witness, with signs and wonders, and divers Miracles, and Gifts of the Holy Ghost, *Ileb.* 2. 4. and confirmed the Word with signs following, *Mar.* 16. 20. The Power of Miracles, is the Spirit's Proof, or Demonstration. My Speech was in Demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power, 1 *Cor*

Quest. But doth not *Satan* himself sometimes work a Miracle, or such a lying Wonder, as will pass for a Miracle?

Ans. Yes, for Doctrines that serve his own ends; but never for a Doctrine that plainly opposes and overthrows them. For so *Satan*, as *Christ* argues undeniably, *would be divided against Satan, and then how could his Kingdom stand?* Mat. 12. 25, 26. If a Doctrine therefore tends to Holiness, as I said, and is worthy of God, as Christianity doth most eminently, a Miracle is a sure proof of it, and 'tis certain the evil Spirits have no hand in working it. Not to mention thote other most demonstrative marks of the Miracles wrought for Christianity, whereof I have already discoursed in † another Place.

† Part I.
c. 3.

Quest. In any Miracles then which are proposed to us, we are to look not only at the works, but also at their end, and usefulness?

Ans. Yes. For if they are for impious, and impure Ends, 'tis plain they come from impious, and unclean Spirits; if only for Ostentation and Praise, from vain-glorious and proud ones; if meerly to gratifie the idle Curiosity of Spectators, like Feats of Juglers, from Ludicrous and Vain Spirits, who delight to amuse with Toys and Trifles. All Miracles, being the effect of intelligent Agents, by their Design shew the Temper and Genius of the Actors. And therefore when any are pretended to come from God, that must be shewn in their gravity, grandure, pious heavenly fruits, or important usefulness. But we must not put his Hand to any, that serve only to vicious ends, or ridiculous impertinence.

Quest. And as God works them only for important and needful ends, Doth he not also only on needful occasions?

Ans. Very right; either of succouring his Servants, or Crediting his Messengers, especially when he sends them out at first to promulge a Law, or sometimes, though in this more seldom, when he sends them to revive it after some great and general Defection from it: and accordingly, the most Miracles that were wrought all the time of the Jewish State, were either by *Moses*, who first published the Law, or by *Elias* and *Elisba* to restore

restore it, after *Jeroboam's Calves*, and *Ahab's Heathen Idols*, had made *ten Tribes of twelve*, most grossly to swerve from it. And therefore it is a vain thing, for any of those to listen after new Miracles, who pretend to Rule their Faith by the Holy Scriptures, which stand attested by all the old ones, as if there were some Defects in the Miracles of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, which need to be supplied by their Followers. But 'tis more especially vain to pretend, as the Church of *Rome* doth, to work such Miracles only among themselves, who believe without them, but never before us, who have more need to be convinced by them. *Moses*, and our Saviour *Christ*, and his blessed *Apostles*, shewed their Miracles among those, whom they design'd to make Converts; or among such young and unsettled Followers, as needed to be confirmed and established in the Faith. And in Testimony to the Man of God, *Jeroboam's* hand is miraculously withered, and as miraculously restored, before the Altar at *Bethel*, the very Seat of the Schismatics, 1 King. 13. 4, 5, 6. And if Tongues are used for a sign, 'tis not to those, saith *St. Paul*, who believe, but to those who believe not, 1 Cor. 14. 22. To shew signs where they are not needed, and withhold them where they are more needful, is not the way and method of his Almighty Power, who is neither wanting in necessities, nor Liberal in superfluities.

Quest. Was this Gift of Miracles bestowed upon the Apostles?

Ans. Yes; God bore them witness, with Signs, and Wonders, and divers Miracles, Heb. 2. 4. and confirmed the word with Signs following, Mar. 16. 20.

Quest. What Miracles had they the Gift of?

Ans. They had the Gift of Healing, without the help of Medicine. To one is given, by the Spirit, the Gift of healing, 1 Cor. 12. 9. And thus by the Holy Ghost, *Peter* and *John* healed the Lame Man, Act. 3. 2, 6. In working these Cures, when our Saviour sent them out at First, they used the Ceremony of anointing with Oyl. They anointed with Oyl many that were sick, and healed them, Mar. 6. 13. And this Ceremony of anointing, was held on † afterwards, whilst this † Thus of the Emperor *Stetius*, *Tertullian* says

that *Proculus Christianus*, *qui eum per oleum aliquando curaverat*, *requisivit*, & in *Palatio suo habuit usque ad mortem ejus*. i. e. that he sought out *Proculus* the Christian, who had once wrought a cure upon him by Oil, and kept him in his own Palace till his Death, *Tert. ad Scap. c. 4.*

Prayer was added to it. Is any Sick among you, says St. James, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them Pray over him anointing him with Oil in the Name of the Lord, for in Christ's Name all their Miracles were wrought: And the Prayer of Faith, i. e. put up in Faith of the miraculous cure, shall save the sick, viz. from his Disease, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed Sins, i. e. if any Sins brought this sickness, they shall be forgiven him in the cure of it, *Jam. 5. 14, 15.*

Quest. By saying of the Sick, here, indeed may seem to be meant saving of him from his Disease; because it follows, and the Lord shall raise him up. But the Prayer of Faith, and forgiveness of Sins, seem to note something else?

Ans. As for the Prayer of Faith, that Agrees very well: for a Faith, or belief that God will enable him to do it, is necessary in every one that works a Miracle. And as for the Forgiving of his Sins; you must know, that the Punishment of Sin, is not only eternal Death, but Present Diseases; and therefore that the sin is forgiven, at least in part, when either of these is taken off. And thus the Scripture speaks of it. For when any sickness, or infirmities, come for sin, our Saviour makes it the same thing to say, *thy sins are forgiven*, as to say *arise and walk*; and accordingly, when he design'd to work a Cure, he would say, *thy sins be forgiven thee*, *Mat. 9. 2, 5.*

Quest. What other Miracles, had they the gift of?

Ans. Of casting out Devils, as the Apostles did out of Multitudes, *Act. 5. 16.* Of Raising the Dead, as Peter raised Dorcas, *Act. 9. 39, 40.* and Paul, *Eutychus*, *Act. 20. 9, 10, 12.* Of inflicting Bodily Diseases, and Torments, as well as Spiritual Horrors, and Supernatural Agonies, on contumacious sinners, as Paul did on *Elymas the Sorcerer*, striking him with blindness, *Act. 13. 8, 9, 11.* and on the incestuous Corinthian, whom he thus punished for the destruction of the Flesh, *1 Cor. 5. 5.* Which Corporal inflictions, he seems plainly to threaten the

the Back-sliders at *Corinth* withal, when he tells them of coming to them with a Rod, 1 Cor. 4. 21. Of using sharpness, 2 Cor. 13. 10. Of Revenging all Disobedience, 2 Cor. 10. 6. Yea, of such sharpness, as would overawe, and humble the most carnal mind, and contemptuous Opposers of Church Authority and Censures: bringing down the Flesh, as he said, of the Incestuous Person; and making them afraid to Blaspheme, as he said of Hymaneus and Alexander, who were most contemptuous and stubborn in their Heretical Opinion, 1 Tim. 1. 19, 20. And this infliction of smart, and Bodily Diseases, upon obstinate Sinners, is called *Delivering over unto Satan*, as the *Apostle* says he had done in these last mentioned Cases.

Quest. Why was this infliction of Bodily smart and punishment upon them, called *Delivering over to Satan*?

Ans. Because these Pains were to be the Effect of God's immediate Justice, and *Satan* should be the Tormentor, and Executioner of God's Vengeance: And therefore, when these Offenders were given up to God's Justice, they were said to be delivered into his Hands. When God in a more immediate, and extraordinary way, sends present heavy Plagues upon Men, especially as a Punishment for sin, *Satan* is often said to inflict them. *Saul's Melancholy*, is called an Evil Spirit from the Lord upon him, 1 Sam. 18. 10. God's Plaguing the Egyptians, sending evil Angels among them, Ps. 78. 49. The Woman, who had been bowed together eighteen years, one whom *Satan* had bound, Luke 13. 11, 16. The Lunatick, a Demonsack, or one vexed with an unclean Spirit, Mat. 17. 15, 18. and Luke 9. 39, 42. And thus, when the *Apostles* gave up Offenders to God to punish them, because the Devil executes the Punishment which God decrees, it is called *Delivering them over unto Satan*.

Quest. This delivering to *Satan* then was an Act of Divine Justice upon these Criminals; and God commanded *Satan* thus to afflict them, as formerly he afflicted *Job*, at the instance of the *Apostles*?

Ans. Yes; and therefore, as 'tis not improbable, it was done with Prayer to God to take vengeance. For so the *Apostle* may seem to express himself, on his Delivering

vering up Alexander. Alexander the Copper-Smith did me much Evil, the Lord reward him according to his Works, 2 Tim. 4. 14. In this he Acted as a Spiritual Judge, delivering up to Justice, and Prayed God to exact the Penalty according to his Sentence.

Quest. Had they the Gift of any other Miracles?

Ans. Yes; for such I reckon was their Joy in Tribulations, and Glorifying even in the very Hour of their Sufferings. When the Council had beaten them, they departed from their Presence, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's Name, Acts 5. 40, 41. Whilst their Stripes were yet sore, and they were pinched in the Stocks, in the Dark Dungeon, Paul and Silas sang Praises to God, and triumphed rejoicing, Acts 16. 23, 24, 25. And upon their Persecution at Antioch, the Disciples were filled with Joy, and with the Holy Ghost, Acts 13. 50, 52. Thus, as if they were not of the same Mold, nor had Bodies like other Men, did they Glory in their Shame for Christ, and rejoice in Tribulation.

Quest. But is not Joy an ordinary Fruit of the Spirit? And why then do you think this rejoicing of theirs, had something Miraculous in it?

Ans. A secret Joy in the sense of God's Love, is common among Good Men, and an ordinary Fruit of the Spirit, and so tis reckon'd, Gal. 5. 22. Yea, and Joy in Tribulation, after the Tribulation is past; for afterwards it yields the Peaceable Fruits of Righteousness, to those that are exercised with it, Heb. 12. 11. But to rejoice in the very midst of it, and under the Stroke, especially under heavy Strokes, as they sometimes did, I think has an extraordinary Gift, and miraculous Aid in it: For under the ordinary Assistance of the Spirit, the Bodily Pain, especially in Stripes and Torture, hinders rejoicing at the very instant. For the Present, no chastening seemeth to be joyous, but grievous, Heb. 12. 11.

Quest. What say you then to the Words of Christ, Rejoice and be exceeding glad, when you are Persecuted for my sake, Mat. 5. 11, 12.

Ans. I think, when understood of rejoicing under the Smarr, and at the very time of Torment, they do not so much express a Duty, that he strictly exacts, as a Gift and Privilege, which he sometimes bestows upon his

Martyrs

Martyrs and *Confessors* : As was visible in the *Apostle's* days, and among the *Primitive Martyrs*. For their minds were sometimes so ravished, and transported, with *Spiritual Consolations*, as to seize all the *Powers* of their *Souls*, and not suffer them to attend to the most *Exquisite Bodily Tortures*. So as that they could smile upon *Racks*, and sing under their *Executioners*, and be so far intranced in *Spiritual Comforts*, as to declare under the most *Bloody Butcheries*, that they were not sensible of any *Pain*. And the same stupendious *Supports*, God has sometimes vouchsafed in later, and modern *Persecutions*.

Quest. I see the *Holy Ghost* endued the *Apostles*, with strange *Gifts* of *Miracles*. But could they work these *Miracles*, at any instant of time when they would ; or were some *Preparations* required to them ?

Ans. There was required to them, 1. Always *Faith* in him that wrought them. And, 2. Sometimes, particularly in miraculous *Cures*, *Faith* in the *Person* that received them, or whom they were wrought upon.

Quest. What was the *Faith* required in him that wrought them ?

Ans. A *Perswasion* that God's *Power* would assist him, and perform the *Miracle* by him. For that they might never offer at this in vain, which would have exposed both themselves, and their *Holy Religion*, whensoever God would enable them to work a *Miracle*, he first possessed their minds with a firm *Belief* and *Assurance* of it. And this is the *Faith*, so oft required of *Wonder-workers* in the *Scriptures*, *Though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains*, 1 Cor. 13. 2. And, *if ye have Faith as a Graine of Mustard-Seed, ye shall say to this Mountain, Remove hence to yonder Place, and it shall Remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you*, Mat. 17. 20. And this *Faith* is reckon'd as one of the extraordinary *Gifts* of the *Spirit*. To another *Faith*, by the same *Spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 9.

Quest. What was the *Faith*, that sometimes, but more especially in the cure of *Diseases*, was required of him that received a *Miracle*, or the *Person* whom it was to be wrought upon ?

Ans. A Perswasion that God would enable the Wonder-worker to do the Cure for him, or to shew the Miracle upon him. This also was another Requisite. For Paul stedfastly beholding the Creeple, and perceiving he had faith to be healed, said to him, stand upright, Acts 14. 9, 10. Believe ye that I am able to do this, said Christ to the blind Men? according to your Faith, so be it unto you, Mat. 9. 28, 29. If thou canst do any thing, said the Father of the Demoniack, have Compassion on us, and help us. Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe I can, all miraculous Things are possible to be done to him that believeth, Mar. 9. 22, 23. And in his own Country, 'tis said, Christ did not many Miracles, because of their unbelief, Mat. 13. 58. or, as St. Mark, he could not do them, God, it seems, suspending this miraculous aid, in the case of such, whose unbelief rendred them unworthy of it, Mark 6. 4, 5.

Quest. What is the third, and last of those extraordinary Gifts, which the Holy Ghost bestowed upon the Apostles?

Ans. The Gift of strange Tongues, whereby they, who were all Jews, were able in an instant to Publish that Religion which God had revealed to them, over all the World, and to be understood by Men of every Language.

Quest. Was this given to the Apostles?

Ans. Yes; visibly at the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended upon each of them, in the shape of Cloven Tongues, like as of Fire, and they spake with other Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance, and talked to Parthians, and Romans, Cretes, and Arabians, and to the devout men from every Nation under Heaven at that time gathered together to Jerusalem, to every man in the Tongue wherein he was born, Acts 2. 1. to 12. And at the imposition of the Apostles hands, it was generally bestowed on others afterwards. As on the Disciples at Ephesus, at the imposition of Paul's hands, Acts 19. 2, 6. on Cornelius, and his Gentile Friends, at Peter's Preaching; for while he yet spake to them, the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word, and they spake with Tongues, and magnified God, Acts 10. 44, 45, 46. And so on others in great numbers, particularly in the Church of Corinth.

Quest.

Quest. To what end were they thus endowed with all Languages?

Ans. To enable them to Preach to all Nations, for they were Commission'd to *teach all Nations*, Mar. 28. 19. And they could not teach them, without speaking to every Man in his own Language. And therefore wheresoever they came, the Spirit immediately made them as perfect in the Language of the Place, as they were in their own Mother Tongue.

Quest. Had not some the Gift of Tongues, who were not sent out to Men of another Language?

Ans. Yes; as particularly in the Church of *Corinth*, for there many would speak in the *Assemblies*, where all, or most were *Greeks*, in *Strange Tongues*; which, because the Church did not understand, St. Paul directs such gifted Linguists, to *Pray* for another Gift of *interpreting Tongues*, to make such enthusiasms intelligible to their Hearers, 1 Cor. 14. 2, 5, 13. In these *strange Tongues* they *Preached*, v. 6. and *Prayed to God*, v. 14. And this, being an offering up both inspired Prayers, and in inspired Tongues, which are both his extraordinary Gifts, is called *Praying*, and *Singing*, *by*, or *with the Spirit*, v. 14, 15.

Quest. To what end then served these strange Tongues, in such Churches all of one Tongue?

Ans. Not to make known Religion indeed, because the hearers did not understand them. But they serv'd to express the Speakers Devotion, and so *edified himself*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. and as a *Sign*, to confirm our Religion, and so were an argument, as all other Miracles were, to prove it true to *Infidels*. *Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not*, v. 22.

Quest. Was there any Gift subservient to this, of speaking with strange Tongues?

Ans. Yes; the Gift of *interpreting those strange Tongues*, when spoken either by themselves or others.

Quest. But I pray you what need of that? did not they that spoke these strange Tongues understand themselves?

Ans. Yes; he that spoke in an unknown Tongue, *edified himself*, 1 Cor. 14. 4. and he that gave Thanks in it, gave Thanks well, as St. Paul says, v. 17. But in this exercise of

of strange Tongues, the heat of Enthusiasm and Divine Rapture, was sometimes so great, that the Speaker could not interpret himself as he spoke, nor remember it after that heat was over, so as to give an explication to those that heard it. And this defect, the Gift of *interpreting Tongues* supplied; which Gift, St. Paul directs those who had the other of speaking with strange Tongues, to beg of God, in order to their greater usefulness. *Let him that speaketh in an unknown Tongue, pray also that he may interpret; i. e.* do it with such consistency, and moderation of mind, as to be able afterwards to give the same, in other more intelligible words, v. 13. and orders, that when any spoke with Tongues, who were not thus qualified to explain themselves, they should speak, not all at a time, as they sometimes did, but by course, and have one still to second them, to interpret their strange Speech, v. 27.

Quest. By this I see what are the extraordinary Gifts, which the Holy Ghost bestowed upon the Apostles, viz. the Gift of *Inspiration*, whereby they should be infallibly instructed in their Religion; of *Tongues*, and *utterance*, whereby they should intelligibly, and undauntedly express and declare it; and of *Miracles*, whereby they should undoubtedly prove and demonstrate it to all the World.

Ans. Yea.

Quest. When Christ promised the Holy Ghost to his Apostles, he calls him by the Name of Comforter, Joh. 16. 7. What is meant by that?

Ans. First, that he should be an *Advocate*, which is one sense of the word *Paraclete*, to plead the Cause of Christ and his Religion, against all that opposed them. This he did most convincingly, in the miraculous Gifts already mentioned. And in this sense, Christ says of him, that when he is come, he will reprove, or convince the world of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment, Joh. 16. 8.

Secondly, a *Comforter*, which is another sense of it, to support them under all that troubled them. This is plainly another sense, since he tells them of sending the Comforter, because sorrow had filled their hearts, v. 6. And this Office he fulfill'd, by assuring them that their Lord, whose death they lamented, was now alive again; by

sup-

supplying his Place, in making their defence, and giving them assistance and direction; and by shewing them an happy end of all their Troubles, and preparing them for the Kingdom of Heaven.

Quest. Is the unpardonable Sin against the Holy Ghost, a Sin against these miraculous Gifts of his?

Ans. Yes; comprehending under those Gifts, not only Miracles, but also Tongues and Inspirations. For it was against the Gift of Miracles, and casting out Devils, that the Pharisees sinn'd; when he cautions them against this dreadful sin, saying, *the sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven*, Mat. 12. 24. 32.

Quest. And what is the unpardonable Sin against them?

Ans. Slandering, or Blaspheming them, as the Pharisees there did by the Gift of Miracles, when they attributed them to Magick, and said, *he cast out Devils by Beelzebub*, v. 24. for it is expressly called *speaking against the Holy Ghost*, v. 32. and *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, v. 31. And this he said, saith Sr. Mark, *because they said he hath an unclean Spirit*, Mar. 3. 30.

Quest. What is meant, by never forgiven in this world, nor in the world to come?

Ans. Not being pardonable under any Dispensation or Religion, either Jewish or Christian. For the Jews looked on the days of Messiah, as a later State, and Dispensation of the Church, to succeed their own: on which account, it is called *the last days*, Isa. 2. 2. & Heb. 1. 2. and *the last time*, 1 Joh. 2. 18. and *the World to come*, Heb. 6. 5. And † some sins were to be atoneable among † See Part 1. Ch. 2. Christians, for which there was no atonement among the Jews, since by Christ they were to be justified from these Things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of Moses, Acts 13. 39. And therefore when Christ says, *this Blasphemy shall not be forgiven in this World, nor in the World to come*, that is the same, as neither to be forgiven in the Jewish State while it lasted, nor the Christian; neither Moses, nor He, having provided any Sacrifice or Expiation for it.

Quest. Is Blaspheming God the Father, or the Son unpardonable?

Ans. No; *whoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him*, Mat. 12. 32. yea, all man-

manner of other Sin, and Blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto Men, v. 31.

Quest. Why then will the Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost never be forgiven? Is he more worthy than either the Father, or the Son?

Ans. No; that is not the reason. But these his Gifts, are the last means of begetting Belief in Men; and without Faith, and Repentance wrought by Faith, there is no Pardon. If Men would not believe, but revile the Son, when he was among them; after he was taken up, the Holy Ghost was to come, and be his Advocate; and by all the miraculous Gifts which I have mentioned, gain credit from them. But if, instead of believing him, they shall go to Blaspheme and Revile him, and slanderously call all his stupendious Gifts magical Tricks, and Works of Satan; God is resolved to endeavour no more with them, nor ever to bring them to Believe, and Repent, without which there is no Pardon. So that it is unpardonable, because after it, God has decreed that Faith, and Repentance, shall be impossible. Of Apostates, says St. Paul, who committed this sin, it is impossible to renew them again to Repentance, Heb. 6. 6.

Quest. These miraculous Gifts were wonderful Vouchsafements: did not they evidence all that enjoy'd them, to be in Favour with God, and in a justified State?

Ans. No; for they were bestowed promiscuously, on good and bad. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness; yet he was a Prophet, 2 Pet. 2. 15, 16. Judas was the Son of Perdition; but he wrought Miracles, as well as the other Apostles, Mat. 10. 1, 4, 5, 8. And at the last Day, many will plead, that in Christ's Name they Prophesied, and cast out Devils, and did Wonders: and yet he will bid them depart from him, because they wrought Iniquity, Mat. 7. 22, 23. 'Tis Obedience, not Miracles, that will save our Souls, it being not the workers of wonders, but workers of Righteousness, that God accepts of. And thereupon our Saviour bid his Disciples rejoyce, not for that the Devils were subject to them, but rather because their Names were written in Heaven, Luke 10. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Quest. Thus much may suffice, for the understanding of the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghost.

But

But besides his bestowing these Gifts, you said he has appointed several Offices for the Planting, and Establishing Christ's Church and Religion, what are those Offices, which he is the Author of?

Ans. He gave some Apostles, the highest, and most extensive power in the Church; and some Prophets, who foretold future Things, Expounded old, and utter'd new Prophecies; and some Evangelists, who writ the Gospels, or preach'd the Word in unconverted Places, where it was never heard before; and some Pastors and Teachers, or Bishops and Presbyters, to govern and instruct the Church: All which he gave for the perfecting of the Saints, the Work of the Ministry, and the edifying of the Body of Christ, Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12. And God hath set in the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers, after that Miracles, Governments, &c. 1 Cor. 12. 28.

Quest. For what end were these Offices appointed?

Ans. For the Government and Edification of the Church, and the Work of the Ministry, in the Word, and Sacraments, and Prayers. They were given, saith St. Paul, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Ministry, and for the edifying of the Body of Christ, Eph. 4. 12.

Quest. And were all these Offices to last through all Ages of the Church?

Ans. No; Apostles, Evangelists, and Prophets, were Temporary Offices, which lay in founding of the Church and revealing Christ's Religion by Inspiration from himself. And this Church being once founded and built, and this Revelation being once committed to Writing, it remains a lasting Thing, and so needs not to be repeated a second time. And therefore, when once they had perform'd this Work, in all after Ages there was no further need of them. But as for Pastors and Teachers, to govern the Church, and ordain Successors, and to minister the Word, and Prayers, and Sacraments, they will be equally wanted in every Age, and therefore the Holy Ghost has appointed them to continue always. Go, Baptise all Nations, teaching them to observe all my Commandments. And so I in such Teaching and Baptising, I am with you always even to the end of the World, Mat. 28. 19, 20. And tho', as I say, some of the

the Offices mentioned by St. Paul were necessary only in the first Age; yet others, which are equally necessary to the *edifying of the Church, and the Work of the Ministry*, in every Age, are to continue, as he says, *till we all, i. e. all Christians that are, and all that shall be, come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fullness of Christ.* So that the Church is to enjoy the Benefit of them to the Worlds end, Eph. 4. 12, 13.

Quest. Since all that are at any time in these Offices die in one Age, how are they to be continued in the next?

Ans. The Bishops or Governours are still to Ordain others, to remedy their own Mortality, and supply the Necessities of the Church, through all Times. Thus Christ told his Apostles, *As my Father sent me, viz. with a Power or Commissioning you to succeed in this Ministry when I am gone; so send I you, i. e. with Power of Ordaining others, in like manner of Succession, John 20. 21.* Pursuant to this, they Ordained Bishops in all Churches; as St. Paul did Titus at Crete, and Timothy at Ephesus. And these, in a constant Succession, were to Ordain others; as Paul bid Timothy give Commissions, as he had been Commission'd himself, or *commit what he had heard of him, to faithful Men, who should be able to teach others also, 2 Tim. 1. 14. and 2. 2.* And with these, in their Work of the Ministry, God would be present and assistant in all after Times, as he had been with the Apostles in the First Age. In thus Preaching and Baptizing, *lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the World, Mat. 28. 20. With you,* that is, with your selves during your own Lives, and your Successors in all after-times; which is the only way, that in this Work he could be with them to the Worlds end, who were all to die in that Age.

Quest. Is the Holy Ghost the Author of these Offices?

Ans. Yes, God hath set these Officers in the Church, saith St. Paul, 1 Cor. 12. 28. and Christ gave them as a Gift, after he was ascended, Eph. 4. 9, 11. That is, God gave them, and Christ gave them by the Holy Ghost, who now, since Christ is gone to the Right-hand of God,

is come down to his Church as his *† Substitute*, from *† Jo. 16. 7.* whom both the Authority and Ability of all these Officers is derived. *Feed the Flock*, saith the *Apostle*, over *and c. 14.* *16, 18.* which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, *Acts 20. 28.* And when Christ ordain'd his *Apostles*, giving them Power to send others, as the Father gave him, and to remit and retain Sins, he breathed on them, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost*, *John 20. 21, 22, 23.* And accordingly, to shew from whom these Powers are derived, in Ordinations of these Officers, whether *Bishops* or *Priests*, the Power is to this day conferr'd by saying, *Receive thou the Holy Ghost.*

Quest. What shall we think then of those who reject the Ministry, and cast off all Church-Officers and Ordinances, and yet pretend in all this to be guided by the Spirit?

Ans. You may be sure it is not by that Spirit which Christ sent down upon the *Apostles*, and which indited the holy Scriptures. For that Spirit gave these Offices, as the most necessary and greatest Blessing to the Church: Whereas this Spirit of theirs, plucks up what he planted, and endeavours to abolish and overthrow them.

Quest. From what you have said, I perceive how infinitely we are obliged to the Holy Ghost, for that care he has taken, in Planting and Propagating Christ's Church and Religion, both in the *miraculous Gifts* which he bestowed upon his Church so amply in the *First Age*, and in the *Offices* and *Governments* which he has appointed to Feed and Rule it in all succeeding Ages.

But besides these extraordinary Gifts, bestowed only on some for the Propagation and Establishment of Christ's Church and Religion, you mention'd another sort of Gifts for the effecting this Great Work of our Salvation, which the Holy Ghost bestows ordinarily, on Persons of all Times and Places. What Gifts are those?

Ans. All the inward Graces and virtuous Endowments, which are necessary to the Salvation of all particular Persons, such as the *Apostle* reckons up, *Gal. 5.* The Fruits of the Spirit are Love, Joy, Peace, Long suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance, and such

such like, v. 22, 23. Particularly, he excites Devotion, and helps to raise in us holy Desires, and Life and Quickness in our Prayers. There, says the Apostle, the Spirit helps our Infirmities, making Intercession for the Saints, according to the Will of God, by inspiring them with such Desires and Groanings as cannot be uttered, Rom. 8, 26, 27.

Quest. Is the Holy Ghost the Author of all these inward Graces in us, and can we not have them without his Gift?

*Ans. No; for the Renewing of our Nature is ascribed to the Holy Ghost, Tit. 3. 5. And St. Paul calls all the recited Virtues, Fruits of the Spirit, Gal. 5. 22. And no Man can come to me, saith Christ, i. e. believe on me, and obey me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him, John 6. 44. All our Graces come from God, and must be sought of him. And because we are daily in want of them, we are taught by our Lord himself to pray, *Hallowed be thy Name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done, Deliver us from Evil, &c.* as constantly as we say, *Give us this Day our Daily Bread.**

Quest. If the Holy Spirit gives these, then any Man, that has them, may know he has Grace, and that the Holy Ghost dwells and acts in him?

*Ans. Yes; if he is affected and influenc'd not only by some few, but by all of them. For they are the Fruits of the Spirit, as I noted; and where we see the genuine Fruit, we may make sure of the Principle that gives Birth to it; as our Saviour said, *The Tree is known by its Fruits*, Luke 6. 43, 44. Mat. 7. 16, 20. And accordingly, they are given as Marks of Grace, and a sure Proof that Men belong to God, in the Holy Scriptures. *Hereby know we that we know him, and that we are in him, if we keep his Commandments*, 1 Joh. 2. 3, 5. *We know that we have passed from Death unto Life, because we love the Brethren*, 1 John 3. 14. *He that doth Righteousness is righteous; in this the Children of God are manifest*, 1 John 3. 7, 10.*

Quest. But may not an ill Man have some good in him? And have not several practised some Virtues, who yet were void of the Spirit, and saving Grace?

Ans.

Ans. Yes : For Herod, an ill Man, heard John Baptist gladly, and did many things, Mark 6. 20. And the Foolish Virgins kept pace in some Points with the Wise, Mat. 25. 1, 2. Either that general Grace, which is common to all Persons, or their particular Inclination, or Interest, or Natural Conscience, can carry on Men, who are Enemies to God in the main, to the Performance of some Duties. And therefore I said these Vertues are a Sign of the Spirit, and of Saving Grace, not when some few or more of them meet by chance in an otherwise evil Man ; but only in those, who have a general Care, and Conscientious Regard to them all.

Quest. You have shewn how these Graces are the Fruits of the Spirit, and the Gift of God. But since God's Spirit is thus to work them in us, may we not leave God's Work to himself, and think our selves free from any Care or Pains about them ?

Ans. No, by no means: For he that made us Men, will not make us Saints, without our selves. He created us by himself alone, but will renew and save us only through our Concurrence with him.

Quest. In carrying on this Work of God, what must we do towards it ?

Ans. Our Heart and Will must go along with it, and our Care and Endeavour too.

Quest. When God's Spirit begins any Grace or Vertue in us, must our Heart go along with it, and are we ready to embrace and make choice of it ?

Ans. Yes ; for he will not force an unwilling Mind into Goodness. And therefore our own Wills are call'd upon when we are press'd to become Good. *I have set before you Life and Good, Death and Evil : Chuse Life,* Deut. 30. 15, 19. And when we obey such Calls, some good Tempers of our own Wills are not'd as the Cause of it. *The Word, and Grace accompanying it, brought forth Fruit,* because it was received in an honest and good Heart, Luke 8. 15. And if we refuse them, and continue Bad, our own Wills still are charged therewith. *Ye will not come to me, that ye might have Life.* Joh. 5. 40. and *Why will ye die, O House of Israel ?* Ezek. 18. 31, 32.

Quest. And when our Heart is thus bent upon any Graces and Good Things, must our Care and Endeavour also be put forth in attainment of them?

Ans. Yes; for God gives these Graces as a Blessing upon our own Care and Pains, and works them in us, when we work with him: So that they are to be the Fruit of our Industry, as well as of his Bounty. God calls to us, *Make you clean*, Isa. 1. 16. *Turn yourselves*, Ezek. 18. 30, 32. as well as we pray to him, *Turn thou us*, Jer. 31. 18. and, *Give us clean Hearts*, Psal. 51. 10.

Quest. But is not God before-hand with us, and gives us some Grace, before we endeavour any thing? *I was found of them that sought me not*, saith the Prophet, Isa. 65. 1.

Ans. Yes; the Grace of outward Revelations and Opportunities. These prevent our Care, and are given before we ask them. In this Kingdom, for Instance, we have the Light of the Holy Scriptures, the Guidance and Care of Pastors, the Benefit of Publick Assemblies, and the Protection of Laws for Christianity, which is not so in Heathen Countries. And we have the Scriptures in our own Language, and Purity of Doctrine, and a truly Primitive, Edifying way of Worship, which is not so in many Christian Nations. And all these, with other Advantages, came to us unasked; we did not seek them, but were born to them. And of these *Isaiab* speaks, who is not treating of inward Assistances, but of outward Revelations, which God would make to the Gentiles, who made no inquiry after them, but had the Revelations brought to them. For the Heathen World did not seek out to the Apostles, but the Apostles sought them.

Quest. And doth not he prevent us too, with good Desires, and inward Motions?

Ans. Yes, he doth, with the First Motions and Beginnings of his Grace. But as for the Ripening of these, and our growing up to a Mastery over our Lusts, and a Saving Pitch; that requires our own Care and Endeavours, which these First Stirrings of Grace must awaken in us. And when we do so endeavour after them, God will still give more Grace, and, by his Spirit, effect in us such Virtues as we labour after; but he will with-

withdraw what he has already given, if we are idle, and labour not at all. For concerning this Improvement of God's Grace, by our own Care and Pains, our Saviour says, *To him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not, i. e. hath not improved what God bestowed, shall be taken away even what he hath, Mat. 25. 29.*

Quest. God's Giving then is only an Encouragement for our Seeking; since he gives those Graces, as he gives our Food and Maintenance, not to idle, careless Men, but only to such as diligently and wisely labour after them?

Ans. Very true; and therefore we are press'd to work them out our selves, by that very Reason. *Work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will, and to do, Phil. 2. 12, 13.*

Quest. What way should we seek these Graces of the Spirit, that by God's Blessing we may attain them?

Ans. First, Pray for them. *If any man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all Men Liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him, Jam. 1. 5. And God will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him, Luk. 11. 13.*

Quest. And must we pray in Faith, that is, ask with an expectation to Receive them?

Ans. Yes; for God cannot bear to see us question his kindness, or distrust his Promise. Our distrust is enough to make him deny us any thing; but we are sure to receive the Graces he has promised, if we dare confide in him. *Whatsoever ye shall ask, Believing, you shall receive, Mat. 21. 22. And if any man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God. But let him ask in Faith, nothing wavering, Jam. 1. 5, 6.*

Quest. What other ways of seeking these Graces, would you direct to?

Ans. Secondly, a frequent and serious use of the Holy Sacrament. That is no unfruitful Ordinance, but conveys Spiritual strength into our Souls, as Bread doth to our Bodies. This the Scripture intimates, when Christ's Eucharistical Body is called Bread, *Joh. 6. 51, 55.* And when the eating Bread, and drinking Wine, is called the Communion of his Body and Blood, that is, the Com-

munication of all those Graces, and Benefits to us, which were purchased by them, 1 Cor. 10. 16.

Quest. Have you any other Rules?

Ans. Yes. *Thirdly*, with Prayers, and Sacraments, we must joyn a Diligent use of *wise and likely means* of attaining the Desired Graces. When we seek to God for Daily Bread and maintenance, it must be in following our Callings, with Prudent Care, and Diligence. And in like sort, when we seek to him for any Virtues, it must be in the use of such Probable, and Discreet ways, as are like to make us Masters of them.

Quest. Would you add any thing further, about the use of these means?

Ans. Yes. *Fourthly*, That it be with a *Faith in God's Power and Spirit*, and a confidence of success through that Assistance. God has promised his Grace and Spirit, to make us Good; as well as his Mercy to Pardon us, when we are so. And we must eye this Promise of his Powerful Assistance, when we set about any Virtue and Goodness. A Faith in his Power, is as necessary to make us Good; as Faith in his Mercy towards all good Men, is to make us desirous of being Good. And to this Faith, the *Scripture* Directs us in working out our Obedience, *Work out your own Salvation, for it is God that worketh in you*, and so strengthen your Hands in that expectation, *Phil. 2. 12, 13.* And *we are kept by the Power of God, through Faith*, viz. in that Power, unto Salvation, 1 Pet. 1. 5.

Quest. Is there any other Rule to be observed, in seeking these Graces of the Holy Spirit?

Ans. Yes. *Fifthly*, That in all the Time we are endeavouring after them, we do nothing to grieve, or annoy him. 'Tis with him, as 'tis with every ingenuous Person, he grows weary of staying, where he finds he is not welcome, and where Men are still taking occasion to displease, and pass Affronts upon him. And therefore, when we are warn'd against several Sins, to conclude all, we are cautioned *not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God*, which is to restrain us from them, *Eph. 4. 30.*

Quest. What things will grieve him?

Ans.

Ans. The *Apostle* there particularly mentions *obscene Talk*, and *corrupt Communication*, ver. 29. But he is grieved by our consenting to all sorts of Sin, for he is a declared Enemy to them all. Especially, if we commit any, against many of his Suggestions, and checks of Conscience: As *David* did in the *Murder of Uriah*, after which he was sore afraid, lest God should take his *Holy Spirit* from him, *Pf.* 51. 11. or if we have finned our selves up to a Custom; or take delight in finning.

Quest. Doth it offend him, knowingly to Neglect, and Slight his good Suggestions?

Ans. Yes; for he is concerned to have them take Place, since he suggests nothing to us, but what is most agreeable to his own most Holy Inclinations, the Honour of God, and our Eternal Happiness. Let us have, that is, use *Grace*, that we may serve God acceptably, *Heb.* 12. 28. And therefore let this pass for a *Sixth Rule* of obtaining his saving Graces, to cherish the Good Suggestions he inspires, and always improve the Grace he has already given, to bring down more from him. For, to him that hath, shall be given, and he shall have abundance, *Mat.* 25. 29. In things of Trust, this is the way of all Discreet Persons, and so 'tis his.

Quest. If we idly neglect, and fail to cultivate our Present Grace, then he will with-hold such further Measures, as he Designed for us?

Ans. Yes; and after long Patience, at last withdraw the former too. For, from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he hath, *Mat.* 25. 29. Thus *Felix*, when he trembled at *St. Paul's* Sermon, not fomenting that Fear, nor proceeding to improve it, and penitently resolve thereupon, fell back, and as we have cause to think, heard no more of it, *Acts* 24. 25.

Quest. These seem Good and plain Rules, for the Attainment of these Graces of the Spirit. And when we are careful to use them, may we be confident of his Gift, and promise our selves that he will bestow them?

Ans. Yes; for therein he fulfils the Design of *Christ* that sent him, and gratifies his own inclination. And this God has promised, and ordered us to expect from him.

him. Bidding us *seek, and we shall find*, Mat. 7. 7. and declaring, how *to him that hath, shall be given*: and *God will give the Holy Spirit to those that ask him*.

Quest. You have shewed me, how we are to attain the Graces of the Spirit. But if they are thus to be our own Attainment, how are they God's Gift? And if, as you said before, God gives them, what need we take all this Care, and Pains, to acquire them?

Ans. If they were an absolute Gift, indeed, we should not need to do it. For when a Gift is absolute, no Conditions are required on our part: And then, no defects in us can hinder, nor any dispositions of ours further, and make way for it. It depends not on any thing in us, but is purely God's Act: So that nothing is left for us to do towards it. But these Graces, are not an absolute, but conditional Grant: before the Spirit gives them, he requires something towards them, and works them not in all Men, but only in those who are prepared for them. Some things hinder them, and they are to be carefully avoided: Others further them, and they are to be diligently pursued. So that we are not to expect them, from God's Grace and Spirit alone, unless we our selves also, in such sort as I have described, concur and joyn with him.

Quest. By what you have said, I perceive how careful the *Holy Ghost* is, to fill our Souls with gracious Dispositions. Doth he not also refresh them, with such *Spiritual Joy and Comforts*, as are apt to result from them?

Ans. Yes. For *St. Paul* reckons *Joy, and Peace*, as well as *Meekness and Temperance*, for *Fruits of the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 22, 23. and Prays, that the *God of Hope*, would fill them with all *Joy, and Peace in Believing*, and that they may abound in *Hope*, through the *Power of the Holy Ghost*, Rom. 15. 13. And *St. Luke* says, the *Churches walked in the Comfort of the Holy Ghost*, Acts 9. 31. And *St. Peter* of the *Dispersed Strangers*, that in believing, they rejoiced with *Joy unspeakable*, 1 Pet. 1. 8. And therefore good Christians must not affect Scruples, or think it any sign of Spirituality, to be of a Down-looked and Melancholy Religion: Since Joy and Peace, a Filial Hope and ingenuous Chearfulness, are Fruits that he loves to produce in them.

Quest.

Quest. But doth the *Holy Ghost* inspire these Comforts into all minds, wherein he displays his saving Graces, which are the Ground of them?

Ans. He is inclined to do it in all. And doth it in one degree, or other; not always producing Raptures, and Transports of Mind, indeed, but ease and quietness, an inward complacency and comfortable Hope, if they themselves do not put a Bar against him. But some minds which he sanctifies, are of a Melancholy Temper, that is prone to sadness and suspicions, especially of themselves. Or are frightened by undue-thoughts of God, as if he were Stern and Rigorous, soon offended, but very difficult to be reconciled. Or mistake the Gospel Terms, as if they were over rigid; and exacted more than can possibly, or at least ordinarily, be performed. Or labour under some other cloudy, and afflicting Error, or Distemper of Mind, which hinders a most comfortable Religion, and peaceful Piety, from creating any Joy or Comfort, in them.

Quest. But when there are none of these intrinsic impediments, to interpose betwixt his Joy and them, doth not he sometimes *Arbitrarily*, and without any provocation, withdraw himself, and hide his Face, as if he were displeased with them? Which withdrawing, is oft given as the cause of many Good Men's Grief and Dejection, and is what some call *Spiritual Desertion*.

Ans. At this rate, indeed, all Spiritual Comfort must needs be most variable and uncertain, as depending, not on any Constancy of good and comfortable Dispositions in themselves; but on the Arbitrariness of such unprovoked withdrawals, to try Experiments upon Men. But this, I think, is all humane invention; the *Scripture*, on the contrary, teaching us, that when *Sinners purify their hearts, and draw nigh to him*, God doth not withdraw himself, and shrink away, but *draws nigh to them*, Jam. 4. 8. It is an imputation on this good Spirit, not at all agreeing with his Inclination, which is to be an immutable lover of Goodness, and of Good Men, to be unalterably pleased with them, whilst they do what is pleasing to him, and to delight in having them take pleasure and joy in him. It seems very opposite to his Office and Undertaking. For his Work and Office, as I have shewn, is to engender Peace and Comfort, as well as Good-

ness, in the Hearts of his Servants. And since that is his business, he will be as constant in pursuing it, and no more withdraw his Comforts, than he doth his Graces from them, without being justly provoked thereto by some act of their own. Nay, on the contrary, when their own melancholy Humours, or mispersuasions, have intercepted his joyful Presence from good Men, he is ready with the light of his Countenance to break thro' that darknels, and, in great pity, very often restores that Comfort to their Minds, which their own errour, or distemper, had driven from it. So that these arbitrary and unprovoked desertions, whether in Grace, or Comforts, as they have no foundation in *Scripture*, but there meet with opposition; so are they not suitable to the Holy and good Spirit's natural Genius, or his Undertaking and Office. He always loves and delights in good Men, and never voluntarily withdraws himself, but is always driven from them.

CHAP.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.

The Contents.

No assurance of Salvation by Christ, but in his Church. This Church Holy. And Catholick. Admission into it by Baptism; when regularly perform'd in any one, valid in all Churches. Excommunication is so too. This Church is one Body by external visible unity. Of the Communion of Saints in this Church. Of their visible Union in Faith or Doctrine. And in Prayers and Devotion. Of communicating in Publick Prayers. A Sin to separate without just cause. Imposing Sins, or Errors, as Conditions of Communion is a just cause. Not Lawful to separate for Things indifferent. Nor for better means of edification. Just to separate from a Church, that doth not impose her Corruptions, when her Errors in Faith overthrow the Foundation. That is, when she ceases to own the one true God. Or denies Jesus to be the Christ, or Salvation by his Merits and Mediation. Owning Jesus to be the Christ, implies, owning the Articles of the Apostles Creed, which contains all Fundamentals. Whilst any Churches hold to this Creed, which is the Foundation, Errors in other things do not unchurch them. But such Erroneous are in a worse state, than Orthodox Christians. Nor is her Communion to be deserted meerly for such Errors, tho' very gross, if she doth not impose them. Just to separate from a Church of a corrupt Worship, when sinful things pollute her Publick Offices. Or when good Devotions are put up in a strange Language, not for Rites and Customs about indifferent matters. Nor just to separate for scandalous Members, where a Churches constitution is faultless. Nor tho' it neglect Discipline, which should reform them. Of keeping Fellowship with the Apostles, by submitting to our lawful Bishops their Successors. Christians to communicate in Affections, in Alms, and Temporal good Things.

Quest.

Quest. **W**HAT is the Ninth Article in the Creed?

Ans. The Holy Catholick Church, the Communion of Saints.

Quest. Is there no assurance of Salvation by Christ, but in his Church?

Ans. No; for Baptism, whereby we are made Members of the Church, is compared to Noah's Ark, whereinto all were to enter, that would not perish with the World, 1 Pet. 3. 20, 21. Christ is represented to us, as the Head of his Church, and the Saviour of the Body, Eph. 5. 23. And God daily added to the Church such as should be saved, saith St. Luke, Acts 2. 47. In the Church, all good Men have a sure Claim to God's Favour, by Promises and Compacts, which ingage him in Faithfulness. But out of it, they stand to courtesie, and can build, at best, only on presumptions, and uncovenanted Mercies; the Covenant which God seals with us, respecting his Church, and being proposed and ratified in the Word which it preaches, and in the Sacraments which it dispenses.

Quest. Must not this make all careful, to be made Members of this Body, and to keep in Communion with Christ's Church, who profess Christianity?

Ans. Most certainly, as without which, by their Religion, there is a want, if they are out of its Communion, of the set means and opportunities; or if they are no Members of its Body, of all expresse Contracts and Promises of Salvation. Our Saviour Christ has appointed, not only the Christian Religion, which all are to believe and practise: but the Christian Church too, wherein they are to profess that Faith, and to Communicate as Members. And the same Baptism, which lists us Professors of his Religion, makes us Members of his Church also.

Quest. Why is the Church called Holy?

Ans. Because it is a Body of Men that is Holy, that is, separated from the rest of the World, and dedicated to Almighty God, Ye are a chosen Generation, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People, 1 Pet. 2. 9. And because, whatever they prove in reality, their Religion is a Profession of Holiness, as their Baptismal Vow, which is made at their

their entrance on Christianity, sufficiently declares. To the Church at Corinth, called to be Saints, 1 Cor. 1. 2.

Quest. Why is it called Catholick?

Ans. To shew its *Universality*, and that it is not confined to one Nation or Place, as the *Jewish Church* was. And the *Catholick Church*, notes the whole Body of Christians, diffused through all places, and enduring through all times. The Church is also call'd *Catholick*, in relation to the *Faith* it holds, which ought to be the same in all Places; and to the *Communion* which it maintains. And in this sense, *particular Churches* are sometimes stiled *Catholick*, meaning thereby, that they are Orthodox, and live in the Faith and Communion of the Catholick Church, not of any Heretical Combinations.

Quest. The Church is Catholick, as containing all Places and Persons: but for maintenance of a *Catholick Communion*, is it not universal as to some Acts, which being done any where, are valid, and equally bind every where?

Ans. Yes; it is Catholick in the Admission into it by *Baptism*, which being duly administred in one Church, makes a Man free of the whole Christian Sociery, and gives him a Right to all Christian Privileges in all other Churches. So that go where he will, every Church shall own him for a Christian, and admit him to Communion, without requiring him to be Baptized over again.

Quest. So that a true Member of *Christ*, who is allow'd to Pray, and receive the Sacrament in one Church, ought to be allowed the same in every Church?

Ans. Yes; and so they were in ancient times, when upon producing their Certificates, and *Commendatory Letters* from their own Churches, Strangers and Travelers were owned as *Brethren*, and admitted to Communion in the remotest Places.

Quest. And is it not fit they should seek this Communion, wheresoever they pass?

Ans. Yes; very fit, to shew themselves true *Catholicks*, and that they own the Christians of all other places, as Brethren, and Fellow-members. But this must be only where they may be admitted to Communion upon lawful terms. For when Churches will suffer none to

to Pray, or Communicate with them, without professing some Errors, or joyning in some forbidden Practice, there is no seeking to associate with such Assemblies.

Quest. Can you shew this Catholick efficacy in other Acts?

† Canon.
Apost. 10.
12. 32. Et
Concil. Nicen. prim.
Can. 5. &
Ep. Cler.
Rom. ad
Cypr. Ep.
30. ed.
Oxon.
* Canon.
Apost. 12.
vid. Zonar.
in loc. &
Can. 33.

Ans. Yes; not to insist on others, *secondly*, in excluding Persons out of the Church by *Excommunication*. For if a Man is justly excommunicated in one Place, the Church, as I shall shew, being but one, that is valid and ought to stand, till he is duly loosed and reconciled again, in all places. He is cast out by *Christ*, who, for any unchristian Practices, is regularly and justly bound, or excommunicated by the Church of *Christ*, for *whatsoever you bind or retain on Earth*, saith he, *shall be bound and retain'd in Heaven*, John 20. 23. and Mat. 18. 18. And whilst *Christ* himself rejects him, 'tis not for any other Church of *Christ* to receive him. And thus it was in the Ancient Church: where, if any for Heretical Stubbornness, or lewd Lives, were cut off from *Christ* by their own Church, no † other Churches would admit them, till they had made their peace again. And to prevent any over-sight, and unwary Communion with an Excommunicate Person; when any Strangers and Travellers, especially such as they had ground to suspect, came to them from Foreign-Parrs, they would not admit them to joyn in their Church-Offices, till they produced their * *Communicatory Letters*, to certifye their being in Communion with their own Churches. And this must make all good Christians extreamly careful, by all innocent ways, to keep the peace of their own Church; and never contumacioussly provoke, or proudly slight it, presuming, if it casts them out, that they may do as well, by being let in, and harboured by others. Which if all *Christ's* Members really believed, *Church Discipline* would not be so precarious a thing; nor would any think, as I fear too many do, that a Church is beholding to them, for sticking to her, and keeping in her Communion.

Quest. What is it to Believe the Holy Catholick Church?

Ans. Not only to believe there is such a Church, but also, agreeable to that belief, in all those Acts which declare our Union with it, to adhere to it

as its Members, against all Factionous Innovators, and Dividers.

Quest. Is this Church but *one Body* ?

Ans. No. For we are call'd to peace in *one Body*, Col. 3. 15. and there is but *one Body*, as *one Spirit*, *one Lord*, *one Baptism*, Eph. 4. 4. 5.

Quest. And is it to be one, by an *External, Visible Unity* ?

Ans. Yes ; for an *external Union*, in the common Offices, Acts, and Advantages of the Society, must shew it to be, what the Scripture calls it, *one Body*. It must have such an Union, as may be taken notice of by Men, and from whence they will say, *Christians*, are all of *one Religion*. I pray not for these alone, but for all that shall believe on me, through their word : That they may all be one, and that so visibly, that the World may see it, and thereby know and believe, that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me, John 17. 20, 21, 22, 23. And this visible Union, is their maintaining *one Communion*, and *Church-Fellowship*, i. e. their readiness mutually to admit or reject the same Members, and to Pray, and Communicate together, and join in all Acts of Christian Worship, Faith, and Charity with each other. By this shall all Men know, that you are my Disciples, if ye love one another. If ye love one another, i. e. if ye love so as to unite, not only in Faith and Affection, and in the Common Privileges and Effects of Society and Incorporation ; but in Worship too, and pray and communicate together. For a readiness to worship God together, must shew as much as any thing their Unity in Discipleship, and that they are all Servants of one and the same Lord and Master, John 13. 35. And accordingly, Prayers and Sacraments, are set down among the Bonds of Union, which compact together the Members of this *one Church*. Of the Eucharist, says St. Paul, we being many are made *one Body*, by being all partakers of that *one Bread*, 1 Cor. 10. 17. And of Baptism, we are all Baptized into *one Body*, 1 Cor. 12. 13. and as many as have been Baptized into Christ, are all one in Jesus Christ, Gal. 3. 27, 28. And among those various ways, whereby the Church becomes *one Body*, he lays down, as *one Faith*, which they all Profess : So *one Baptism*, whereof they all partake ; *one God*, and Father of all, whom they all invoke with

with *one Hope*; and *one Lord*, whom they all serve and worship, *Eph.* 4. 4, 5, 6.

Quest. Doth this *visible Union* imply a profest subjection of the whole Church, to one *visible Head*, the *Bishop of Rome*?

Ans. No; that is a Title too haughty to be assumed, and a Power too extensive to be managed by any one Person. Besides, in Scripture, there is not the least mention of this universal Headship. No, not in the † *Lifts of Church-Powers, and Ministrations*, where this, which is the highest of all others, could not be left out. Nor, in Silencing any *Heresies*, or deciding any *Controversies* and *Disputes*, of which there was great number then in the Church; and for determination whereof, as it ought to have been used, so 'tis not conceivable, had it then been owned, but the *Apostles* would have directed and sent Men to it, or the Litigants themselves would have appeal'd to its Sentence. Among the *Apostles*, our Blessed Lord precludes all pretence to such Power, telling the

† *1 Cor.* 12.
28. *Eph.* 4
11.

† *Ver.* 14. † *Twelve*, when they were at *strife* who should be highest in Empire and *Lordship*, that one of them should not bear Rule, and exercise Authority over the rest, *Luke* 22. 24, 25, 26. And as for St. *Peter*, in particular, he set up no claim of Power over the other *Apostles*, but bore himself in all things towards them, and was correspondently treated by them, as a Brother. In any common Debates, and particularly in the *Council of Jerusalem*, he

† *Ver.* 19. did not so much as preside, as St. *James* there † seems rather to have done, but as an Equal, gave his Reasons, and his Voice among them, *Acts* 15. 7. When his actings seem'd very *Novel* and *Doubtful*, as his going in to *Cornelius*, and his *Gentile Friends*, the *Brethren of the Circumcision* freely required an Account thereof, and stiffly contended with him, *Acts* 11. 2. And when they were really *Blame-worthy*, as his *dissimulation* was at *Antioch*, St. *Paul*, like his *Com-Peer Apostle*, openly *wish-stood*, and rebuked him, *Gal.* 2. 11, 12, 13, 14. These, with sundry other like Passages, shew how unknown such Universal Headship was in the *Apostle's* time. And the same may be made appear of the Church in the Ages following. But that *visible Unity*, which all Christians were obliged to endeavour after in the Church, was preserv'd, as I say, by their joint readiness to communi-

care

care externally as Brethren, not by a profest subjection of all Churches to one visible Head, and submitting to his Authority and Jurisdiction.

Quest. In this one Church, indeed, as it follows in the Creed, there must be a *Communion of Saints*; what is meant by *Saints*?

Ans. *Christians*. By their Enemies, they were styled * *Hereticks*, or *Nazarenes*. But the Names which they gave themselves, were the † *Elect*, the * *Brethren*, the † *Christians*, or many times the * *Saints*, as is very commonly seen in the *inscriptions*, or salutations, of the *Epistles* writ to them, by the Holy *Apostles*.

Quest. And what is the *Communion of these Saints*, or *Christians*?

Ans. Their joining in common in those things, which make them *Christians*, or in the mutual reception or rejection of Members, and in the common Offices and concern of *Christianity*. There must be Communion, because of their Unity as one Body. And this Communion must be insomething sensible, to shew a visible Unity, which the World shall see, and reflect upon, as I noted from our Saviour.

Quest. In what doth this Communion consist?

Ans. In adhering to the same *Doctrine*, *Government*, and *Worship*, both in *Prayers*, and *Sacraments*. For in these *St. Luke* places the Communion of the Primitive Church. They continued steadfastly in the *Apostles Doctrine*, and Fellowship, and breaking of Bread, and in *Prayers*, *Acts* 2. 42.

Quest. How must they keep to the same Faith, and *Doctrine*?

Ans. By adhering to the *Holy Scriptures*, which ought to be every where the same Rule of it. And this Unity of Faith requiring, not only that they inwardly believe the same things, but also that they outwardly profess that Belief: to make Unity in this Profession, in the first days there is mention of its being drawn up into a *Form of Sound Words*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 13. This *Form*, by degrees, grew up into the *Apostles Creed*, which contains all that *Catholick Doctrine*, that is necessary to make any Man a Good Christian, and which accordingly has been still received as the *Form* in *Baptism*, the most learned,

* *Act.* 24.

5, 14.

† *Col.* 3. 12.

Tit. 1. 1.

* *Act.* 9. 30

† *Act.* 11. 26.

* *Rom.* 1.

7. 1 *Cor.*

14. 33.

of *Jude* 3.

learned, not professing more thereat, nor the most ignorant, less, through the several Ages of the Church.

Quest. This united Adherence to the *same Rule* and *Form*, will keep up a visible Union in *Faith*, or *Doctrine*. But how can they all be thus united in *Prayers* and *Devotions*, not having one and the same *Form of Prayer* and *Liturgies*?

Ans. By making them all according to the *same Rules*, and for the *same intents and purposes*. For all their *Prayers* are put up to one and the same God, for one and the same common mercies, on the same common terms and expectations, through the same common Merits and Mediation, and with the same common Affection and Brotherly Concern for each other. Which make them in *Substance* the same *Worship* and *Devotions*, though put up in far distant places, or in different *Forms of expression*, or *Languages*.

Quest. According to what you said before of the *Unity of the Church*, the Members of this one Body, must not only worship, and pray like each other, but be ready to worship and pray together. But how can we communicate, or joyn in the use of *Prayers*, and *Sacraments*, with all Christians, who are so far spread, and widely distant in their *Habitations*?

Ans. With *Foreigners*, we are bound to joyn only as we meet with them. When we happen to be amongst them, or they amongst us, to shew we are all of the same Body, and that the Church is one, we must mutually Associate in *Worship*, and receive each other to *Communion*, not sticking at any different *Rites*, and *Usages* which we find in other Churches, whilst there is no Sin in them. And as for the Christians of our *own Country*, there is no difficulty of joining thus in *Worship*, yea, and *Government* too with them, because we are all under the same *Laws* and *spiritual Guides*, and live amongst them.

Quest. Do you lay much weight upon *Publick Prayers*, and think that the People ought to place much in attending the Churches Service, and Praying along with the *Minister*?

Ans. Yes. For though God is ready to hear any Good Man, by himself alone: Yet, for the Countenance of

the Publick Worship, and the maintenance of good order, he sets particular Marks of Favour on those Prayers which are offer'd to him in Publick, in concurrence with his Minister. Thus, in the *Jewish Law*, he appointed the *Priests* to Offer, and burn Incense † twice a Day, for a Daily Service: the end whereof was, to present those Prayers, which the * People offer'd up during his Ministration, as a sweet smell to God in these Perfumes. And *David*, when he would desire a great Recommendation to his Prayers, begs that they may come fortifi'd with this advantage, to be set forth in God's sight like Incense, *Psal.* 141. 2. In like manner, the four and twenty Elders in the *Revelations*, that is, the Bishops or Pastors of the Church, are represented as having every one, like the *Jewish Priests*, Golden Vials full of Odors, which are the Prayers of the Saints, *Rev.* 5. 8. And when any Persons in sickness, would have Recourse to Prayers, *St. James* directs them to present them by their Pastors. and send for the Elders of the Church, *Jam.* 5. 14. And *Jesus Christ*, that Angel, who at the Golden Altar, offers up the Prayers of all Saints, is set out particularly as presenting those Prayers of theirs, which came up with the smoke of Incense, *Rev.* 8. 3, 4. Not to mention the many other Advantages of Publick Prayer, as its being an addressing to God in a Body, and united Number, which in all Addresses, is confessedly a way of most Force and Power; and among them, perhaps, in conjunction with some of the best Souls, and very likely, with several more Holy, and dearer to him, than our selves, for whose * sake he * *Gen.* 22: may be more like to hear our joint supplications, as he would bear *Job* for his Friends, when he would not accept either their Prayer, or Sacrifice, at their own hands, *Job.* 42. 7, 8. And therefore it is a most fond and prejudicial, as well as criminal and inexcusable Carelessness, for Men so sloathfully, and irreligiously, to neglect the daily Opportunities of Publick Prayers, as, God knows, the generality do; yea, though under this neglect they do serve God at home, and have Prayers daily in their own Families.

Quest. You speak of Communicating in Prayers, tho' there be no Sermon.

Ans. Yes; for certainly no Man, that comes to Church to serve God, if he understand what that is, can come

more for Sermons, than for Prayers sake. 'Tis for Prayers principally, that we are to come to the House of God, for *my House is the House of Prayer*, says God. *Isa.* 56. 7. and *Mat.* 21. 13. In these it is, that God's Worship doth chiefly consist. And by these especially, the Saints of all Times, and Places, thought to worship God. And these, above all our other Services, our Mediator is careful to offer up to God from us, that, which he is represented, as presenting *at the Golden Altar* from the Publick Assemblies, being *the Prayers of the Saints*, *Rev.* 8. 3, 4. And therefore it shews a very untaught and ignorant, as well as an irreligious and Prophane Objector, to pretend that he will not go to Church, because there is nothing but Prayers: for that is one of the chief things for which he should go thither, and the very Life and Spirit of our Service and Performance there.

Quest. But if we are bound thus, not only to Unity of Doctrine, but likewise to preserve Unity of Publick Worship and Communion, what shall we think of *Schism*, that is, *rending and dividing the Church*, either the whole Church, or that part where we live, and thereby making two Churches out of one? Is it a Sin to Erect new Churches, and separate in these Acts of Prayers and Sacraments, from our lawful Pastors, or from the Body of a Church, or Nation?

Ans. Yes, most certainly, and a very great one, except there be a *just Cause* of Separation. For so at *Corinth*, *St. Paul* told them, whilst *one was for Paul*, and another for *Apollos*, and there were Divisions among them, they were *Carnal*, and walked as men, *1 Cor.* 3. 3, 4. And at *Rome*, he bids them *mark those who cause Divisions and Offences*, and not adhere and associate with them, but avoid them, *Rom.* 16. 17. And this he spoke of *Schism*, whilst it was only an imperfect Birth, nor gone on to open Separation, but only to such unquiet practices, and making of Parties, as would shortly end therein. For so, under all the *Corinthian Sidings and Divisions*, he declares that they came together still in the same Church, and met to partake in the same *Worship*, yea. and *Supper of our Lord*, *1 Cor.* 11. 18, 20.

Quest. What is a *just Cause* of Separation?

Ans.

Ans. 'Tis one just Cause, if a Church suspends her Communion on unrighteous Claims and Inroachments, and will admit none to her Communion and Religious Offices, unless she may be allow'd to usurp upon their just Rights and Liberties. As the Church of *Rome* will not, unless she be received for the Head and Mistress of all Churches. But the chief Cause of Seperating, is a necessity of Sinning if we joyn with them. Which is then highest, when sinful things are not only inserted into their Sacred Offices, but are likewise imposed by any Society of Christians, as the Conditions of their Communion. We are to maintain the Churches Peace, only *† so far as lyes in us*; but we have no Power, or Liberty, to sin for it. *† Rom. 12. 18.* The Church it self is called *Holy*, and therefore we must not think to shew our selves its true Members, by acting unholily. When without sinning we cannot continue with them, the voice of the Scripture is, *come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, 2 Cor. 6. 17.*

Quest. And when doth a Church impose such sinful things?

Ans. When it will not allow us to be of its Communion, without Believing, or Professing, Errors of Faith; or committing sins in Practice. As the Church of *Rome* doth, by casting all out of its Communion, who will not believe that Churches Infallibility, and Transubstantiation, which are Errors in Faith; nor Adore the Host, Worship Images, Pray to Saints and Angels, and the like, which are sins in practice.

Quest. It is no breach of Church-Unity then, nor Act of sin, to separate from such Imposers of unlawful things?

Ans. No; but an adhering to *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and the *Universal Church* of all Ages, who disclaim these Corruptions. In these particulars, the imposing Church separates her self from *Christ*, and the *Catholick Church*, and therefore we keep the Unity of the *Catholick Church*, in adhering to it against her, who makes an upstart Combination, and proves a *Schismatical* Divider.

Quest. What if a Church is not chargeable, for imposing things evil, and unrighteous: but imposes things indifferent upon its own Members, or on any others,

who seek to Communicate in its Holy Assemblies. Is it just to Separate, for its imposing indifferent things ?

Ans. No ; because they lawfully may be done, and have no sin in them. For all *sin is the transgression of a Law*, 1 John 3. 4. and therefore there can be no sin in indifferent things, since they would be no longer indifferent, but unlawful, if there were any Law against them. And in things that lawfully may be done, its own Members must not break with their Church, but comply out of due Obedience ; and others out of a desire of Unity and Peace. We are to *keep Peace as much as lies in us* ; and indifferent things certainly do, since they are no where forbidden to us. Nay, in these things, a good Christian should be easie, not only in submitting to *Church-Laws*, but in complying with innocent *Church-Customs* ; St. Paul, thinking it Argument sufficient in a little Case, to say, *we have no such Customs, nor the Churches of God*, 1 Cor. 11. 16.

Quest. Is it unjust also to Separate from a Church, on pretence the Establish'd Means there are *less Edifying* ?

Ans. Yes ; for the Means were less Edifying in the Assemblies at Corinth. Many *spoke confusedly at once*, which was not a *doing Things to edifying*, 1 Cor. 14. 26, 27. And many *spoke in strange Tongues*, which could not Edifie their Hearers, because they *did not understand them*, v. 16, 17. But under this less Edifying State, it was not lawful to divide. *Whilst there are Divisions among you, are you not Carnal*, 1 Cor. 3. 3. All Christians must seek to Edifie * the Church, as well as themselves ; and the Church is Edified by Unity and Peace. *Follow after the things, which make for Peace, for with them we must Edifie one another*, Rom. 14. 19.

Quest. I see there is a just Cause of Separation, when a Church imposes any Sins, or Errors, as Conditions of her Communion. But what if a Church, that is Defiled with these, is yet so Moderate, as *not to impose* them ; may she not, for all that, be so far corrupted with them, that on account thereof all Good Men, who would take due care of their own Souls, ought to leave her Communion ?

Ans. Yes, if she errs so foully in Faith, as to overthrow, or go off from the Foundation. Or, if she plainly

* Vid. a Discourse explaining the Nature of Edification. Both of particular Persons, &c. p. 13. & Sequ.

ly inserts sinful Defilements and corrupt Mixtures into her Sacred Offices, which sets all free to forsake her Assembly, and seek out others who offer up a more Holy and acceptable Service. Especially if her Corruptions have so overspread, and poison'd all the necessary Parts of her *Worship*, that there is no joyning in her Prayers and Sacraments, without joyning in the Corruptions too, that are Embodied with them. In these cases, *be ye Separate*, saith the Scripture, *and touch not the unclean thing*, 2 Cor. 6. 17. and *come out of her, my People, that ye be not Partakers of her Sins, and that ye receive not of her Plagues*, Rev. 18. 4.

Quest. One Case, you say, is in *Errors of Faith*, which overthrow the Foundation. What mean you by the *Foundation of Faith*?

Ans. Such points of it, as are the very *Bottom and Ground-work of the Christian Covenant*, whereinto we are all Baptized, and whereon the Church is Erected. They are such Articles, as are the Root of all that *Worship*, and Obedience, which we are to pay to God; of all that Submission, Trust, and Adoration, which we are to shew towards *Jesus Christ*; and of all that Labour, and Success, which we are call'd to here in the Prosecution of an *Holy Life*. All the Points of our Christian Faith, are alike *True*: but all Truths, are not alike *Useful*; nor all useful Truths, alike *Necessary*. 'Tis necessary for us to believe all, when we are sufficiently shew'd that Christ has taught them. But 'tis more-over necessary for us all to see that he has taught some, which are not only to be Believed, because they were Revealed; but were therefore Revealed, because necessary to be Learned, and Believed, of all that retain to him. And these Points, which are not only profitable, but necessary to the *Worship and Service of God by Jesus Christ*, and to the maintenance of the Christian Covenant, and of the Church which is Built upon it, are called *Fundamentals*.

Quest. Can you shew me, what points are such?

Ans. One is the common Foundation of all true Religion, *Mosaical*, and *Natural*, as well as *Christian*; and that is, *the Belief of the One True God*, not only of his *Being*, but also of his *Providence*, and Care to Reward those that seek him. Thus St. Paul sets down *Faith towards God*, as one Article to be first laid, Heb. 6. 1. For

he that comes to God in any way, saith he, must believe that he is; and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him, Heb. 11. 6. This Faith in the one true God, is overthrown, not only when Men over-look, or deny him; but also when they joyn, any Gentile Gods, who were Apostate Spirits, in Copartnership with him. For every true Church, must have Repentance from Idols towards God, as well as Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, Act. 20. 20, 21. And this is Life eternal, says our Saviour, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, Joh. 17. 3. And he is Antichrist, saith St. John, that denies the Father and the Son, 1 Joh. 2. 22. If she cast off the Belief of the one true God, the common Principle of all true Religion, she is the Congregation of some Fals Spirits, which set up for false Gods, and not the Church of the Great God of Heaven. As well, as if she have not Faith in Christ, she is no longer Christian.

Quest. But when a Church professes Faith in the one true God, the common Ground-work of all true Religion: What is the particular Foundation of the Christian Religion?

Ans. Belief of Jesus being the Son of God, and the Christ, and of Salvation by his Merits and Mediation. When Peter confessed Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, our Saviour said, upon this Rock will I build my Church, Mat. 16. 16, 18. And St. Paul says, the Foundation which he had laid, and other than which no Man can lay, is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 3. 11. And the compass of saving Knowledge, marked out by our Lord himself, as I noted, is, together with the Knowledge of the one true God, to know Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Whilst any Church retains this Faith in Christ, it is Christian, and has Right to Baptism, as St. Philip declar'd to the Eunuch, who was Baptised upon his making this Confession, Act. 8. 37, 38. But if it denys this Authority of Christ, and its dependance upon him, for Salvation; it is thereby unchurched, and becomes unchristian, like Jewish, Mahometan, or Heathen Churches, and is put out of the ordinary way of Salvation, there being no Name under Heaven given among Men, whereby we may be saved, but his alone, Act. 4. 12.

Quest.

Quest. But doth not this Grand Article of *Jesus being the Christ and Saviour*, imply in it sundry other Articles?

Ans. Yes; if we Believe *Jesus to be the Christ*, we must believe all the *Holy Scriptures* as his Word, and they contain all Articles. But it more especially implies his *Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection*, and other great Articles of the *Creed*, which must be expressly owned by every one who rightly understands it. And accordingly, in the various Repetitions of this Grand Article, and Representations of the *saving Faith*, one or other of these, is oft-times added, and given as the instance of it. * Be-
lieving Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of God, you may have * 1 Joh. 4.
Life through his Name, saith St. John, shewing the neces- 15. &c.
 sity of this main Foundation, *John* 20. 31. But St. Paul, 5. 1.
 speaking of this Grand Doctrine, says, *I determined to know nothing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him Crucified*; setting out the knowledge of *Christ*, in the knowledge of his *Passion*, *1 Cor.* 2. 2. And, *if thou confessest the Lord Jesus, and believe God raised him from the Dead, thou shalt be saved*; exemplifying the saving knowledge of *Jesus*, in the Belief of his *Resurrection*, *Rom.* 10. 9. And when he commanded us to preach him, saith St. Peter, *he commanded us to preach, and testifie, that it is he, who is ordained of God, to be the Judge both of quick and dead*; illustrating the *Preaching Christ*, by preaching the *Judgment to come*, *Act.* 10. 42. Every Spirit that confesseth *Jesus Christ is come in the Flesh, is of God*: And every Spirit that confesses it not, is *Antichrist*, and not of God, saith St. John; explaining the Confession of *Jesus Christ*, by the Confession of his *Incarnation*, *1 Joh.* 4. 2, 3. And speaking of the *Record*, or *Witness*, which God had given to the *Christian Doctrine*, he thus declares the matter attested by him. *This is the Record, God hath given us Eternal Life, and this Life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath Life; and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not Life*: Setting off the *Christian Religion*, and the *Saving Faith*, by the Belief of the *Life everlasting*, *1 Joh.* 5. 10, 11, 12. And as for the Belief of the *Holy Ghost*, the necessity of that, and of our Dependance on him, to make a *Man a Christian*, our Saviour has sufficiently expressed, by ordering our very *Baptism*, which initiates us into *Christianity*, to be *into his Name*, *Mar.* 28. 19.

Quest. This indeed shows the importance of these Points, and that the Scripture sets them all out to us, as necessary and saving Articles. But doth that Grand and Comprehensive Point, of *Jesus being the Christ*, and of *Salvation by his Merits and Mediation*, imply the same in a true understanding thereof?

Ans. Yes, as might be shown of the Particulars in sundry respects, were that needful here to be more fully discoursed of. But I shall briefly note, that without believing *Jesus* to be *the Son of God*, or one having the Divine Nature, we should not Worship, and Devote our selves to him. And without believing him to be *our Lord*, we should not Serve and Obey him. And without a Belief of his *Birth*, and *Sufferings*, as it follows in the Creed, or of his *Incarnation*, and *Passion*, we know him not as he is *Christ the Saviour*: For he saves us, by suffering Death in our Place; and if he had not been a mortal Man, like us, he could not have suffered Death. And then for his *Rising again from the Dead*, how could we seek to him for Help, and trust in him, if we thought him still to be a Dead Man; or believe that he should save us from Death, if he had not yet saved himself himself from it? Yea, and why should we look to receive this Salvation from him when he is risen, and the Holy Spirit to enlighten and fit us for the same; unless we believe, that he is *ascended into Heaven*, there to appear in the Presence of God, (from whom this Salvation is to be received, and this Holy Spirit is to be sent,) and to claim and intercede for all those things, which his Death has purchased for us. Nay, unless we believe, that he is there *seated at the Right Hand of God*, and stated in such Power, as may qualifie him in all Respects for an Almighty Prince and Saviour, from whom all Grace and Help may be constantly and universally derived, as it is wanted, or desired. And without Believing, that he, who has made us Promises, and who, as *Christ the King*, has given us Laws, and intrusted us with Talents, will *come again to judge us* and take an account of us; we should neither labour in his Service, nor think our selves sure in the end to receive the promised Mercies and Rewards thereof. And, lastly, without a Belief of *the Remission of Sins*, of *the Resurrection of the Body*, and of *Life everlasting* to be had in his Church, by virtue of his
Death

Death and Intercession for us, and to be awarded at the Judgment Day to all his Faithful Followers, we should not look upon him as our Saviour, to make us triumph over Sin and Death; nor be sufficiently encouraged to deny our selves, and all gain-saying Interests, and Devoutly to spend all our Days in his Worship and Service. So that all these other Articles, are only Ingredients and necessary Appendages, of this Grand and Comprehensive Article, of *Jesus being the Christ and Saviour*. And all these Points, together with those others in the Creed about *God the Father*, and the *Holy Ghost*, are *Fundamental in the Faith*. For they are the very Ground and Foundation, of our Subjection to the *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, (the Parties whom we contract withal in the *Christian Covenant*;) of all our Adoration, Trust, and Submission, to the Blessed *Jesus*; of our worshipping, and serving God by him; and of all that Holiness of Life, which is the great Design of all Religion, and which must gain us the Divine Acceptance; on all which Accounts, they are necessary and Ground-work Articles of Christian Faith, and properly call'd *Fundamentals*.

Quest. By this it may seem, that the Believing *Jesus to be the Christ*, is in more explicit words, to believe the *Apostles Creed*, since that sets forth all the Forecited *Articles*; and that the *Articles* thereof, are no *trivial*, or *inferiour Truths*, but *Fundamental in the Faith*. But doth it contain all Points of meer Belief, that are necessary and *Fundamental*?

Ans. Yes. For it was made for a Badge of true Christians; and thereupon, we may conclude, was design'd to be no ways Defective, in any necessary Articles of Christianity. It has all along been the Form of Faith at *Baptism*, and was all which not only the Ignorant, but even the most Learned then professed: So that it is sufficient to make any Person a Disciple and Member of *Jesus Christ*. It was held, and styled, as is well known, by the *Ancient Fathers*, as the *Canon*, the *Sum*, the *Perfect Sum of Faith*; that *Token*, which was sufficient to shew who preached Christ according to the Doctrine of the *Apostles*, and to distinguish Believers from Infidels; that where-in the Church Educated, and Catechized her Children; and, in sum, which passed as the Test of common Christianity

stianity among them. Lastly, since the Compilers of it, shor't as it is, gave room to some things only Circumstantial, as the *Judge* under whom *Christ* suffer'd, and the *Time* of his Rising from the Dead: 'Tis not to be thought they would omit any thing essential, and of the Body of the Faith, which was necessary to be inferred.

Quest. Whilst any Church then professes this *Creed*, which is the Foundation, doth it continue a *Christian Church*, tho' it tacks thereto many gross Errors, and, as *St. Paul* says, *builds Wood, Hay, and Stubble thereupon*? *I Cor. 3. 12.*

Ans. Yes; for they, who profess this, may be Baptized, as I said; and *Baptism* admits Men into the Church, and makes them Christians. And some Churches, in the *Apostles* Days, had imbibed sundry great Errors; but retaining still their *Faith in Christ*, they were owned, notwithstanding, as *Churches of Christ*, and styled and treated so, in the *Apostolical* Epistles to them. And tho' it be a most sad thing, to consider of the present divisions of *Christendom*: yet, God be thanked, this *Creed*, which is the full Foundation of Faith, is still unanimously own'd, and profess'd, by all Churches, which make any considerable Figure and large spread, or have attain'd at this day to become National in the Christian World. On account whereof, how wide soever their Differences, or great the Errors, of many of them are in Superstructures, we must still look upon them as *Churches of Christ*; tho' some, alas! are very degenerate and corrupt ones.

Quest. And may they be saved too?

Ans. Yes; if they have nothing else to hinder their Salvation, but such Errors, and under them they sincerely fear God, and work Righteousness. For *Christ is the Saviour of the Body*: so that retaining so much truth as may qualifie them to be of the Church, and receive Baptism; they have so much, as is indispensably requisite to Salvation. But, that they are saved notwithstanding their great Errors, which imply unbelief of some weighty and concerning Truths which our Lord has revealed to us, is on the score of their well meant and pittyable Ignorance, or of their unmasterable Prejudices and Prepossessions. Whilst Men hold the Foundation, and err only

only in superstructures : tho' their corrupt superstructures, *their Hay, and Stubble, which they Build thereupon*, as St. Paul says, *shall be burnt, and suffer loss*: yet, for the Foundations sake, if they do not hold the Errors thro' an evil mind, nor are obdurate in them against convictive Evidence, *the Persons themselves may be saved*, who were such unskilful Builders, 1 Cor. 3. 15.

Quest. Are not such erroneous Christians or Churches then, in as good a State, as more sound and Orthodox ones?

Ans. No; they are neither so sure of having any Reward, nor, if that falls right, like to receive so much of it. For their Errors make their passage at the Day of Judgment to the side of the Blessed more *hazardous*; Errors being punishable in some, as well as pardonable in others, according as they have more or less of *willfulness*. And if finally they do not hinder it, they will at least render it more *difficult* and *painful* to them; as the Apostle intimates, in comparing Mens escape from among such Errors, to ones elcaping out of a House *all on Fire* about him. Yea, I add, as with much pain and trouble, so with much *harm* and *loss* too. For their superstructed Works at that day, suffering loss, instead of receiving recompence, their reward for the Foundations sake, which they still hold, will be less than the reward of other Christians, who not only hold to it, but also build thereon rewardable superstructures, void of their Corruptions. This the Apostle sets off

by † *Fire*, which, when it tries solid Works, like as when it proves *Gold*, or *Silver*, doth no harm, but only makes them finer. But when it meets with corrupt ones, like as when it seizes *Hay*, or *Stubble*, it feeds upon them, and consumes them, as combustible Matter. *If a mans work*, says he, *abide the Fire*, which tries all Works at that Day, *he shall receive a reward* for it. *But if any Man's Work be burnt, he shall suffer loss*, yet *he shall be saved*, but so as by *Fire*; i. e. snatch'd out of the midst of such superstructures, as are set all on Fire, like a

Man

† Not the *Purgatory Fire* of the Church of Rome, which is only for Sinners, whose Sins, not fully purged before, are to be purged there, either by the *Fire* it self, or by the Application of others merits, in *Indulgences*, or by the help of *Masses*, *Prayers*, or *Alms* done for them, by their Friends on Earth. And all this, before the Day of Judgment; they themselves, after that is once pass'd, owning only *External Punishments*. Whereas, the *Fire* here spoken of, besides its liableness

to

to metaphorical interpretations, if it be literal, is at the Day of Judgment. The Day, viz. That great signal Day, which tryes and manifests all Actions, and which shall be revealed by Fire (the proper Character and Description of the Day of Judgment in Scripture, 2 Thes. 1. 7. 8.) shall declare it, v. 13. as several of the Fathers talk of a Purging Fire, viz. The great Fire at the end of the World; which they fancy'd might prove all things else, when it refines the Earth, and Heavens. And this Fire is further said, to be for the Tryal of every Man; and of every Work, Gold and Silver, as well as Wood, and Stubble: not only for the punishment of evil Works, and unpurged evil Workers, as theirs is, v. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Man rescued out of a House on Fire, where he lay encompassed with the Flames: which is a way of escape full of damage, as well as difficulty and danger, 1 Cor. 3. 13, 14, 15. So that the reward of the pityably misled, is neither so considerable, nor so secure, as that of the Orthodox and well directed.

Quest. And whilst a Church holds to this Foundation of Faith, are we not to forsake her, meerly for her building many gross Errors thereupon, if she doth not impose them?

Ans. No; not if she otherwise maintains Unity, and her Worship is Right, and those Errors in Faith are all the Exception which lyes against her Communion. For under such Errors, as I have shewn, it still remains a Christian Church: and among all true Christians, there should be the Communion of Saints, i. e. a readiness to joyn mutually in the Worship, Offices, and Society, of our common

Christianity. Imposing no unrighteous Encroachments, we may stick to her without wrong; and maintaining Unity, we may joyn our selves to her without Schism; and introducing, or requiring, no unlawful Parts or Terms of Worship and Communion, we may unite with her in all the Parts of her Sacred Service without Sin. And then if we separate, it is without just cause; and it is always blame-worthy, to separate causelessly from any Church, or Christians. And thus the Apostles taught the Christians to practise, in their Days. For many great Errors had then crept into the Churches, tainting either the Church it self, or at least some of the Members thereof. Some, indeed, struck at the very Foundation, as that of denying Jesus Christ to be come in the Flesh, a Point, the Profession whereof is necessary, to our having both the Father and the Son; and accordingly the denial of it, is given as a sure mark of an Antichrist by St. John, and all Christians warn'd not to have any Communion,

or Society with him, 2 Joh. 7. 9, 10, 11. Such also was
 the error of thole at *Corinth*, who deny'd the *Resurrecti-*
on, 1 Cor. 15. 12. and that of the most rigorous sort of
Judaizers, who set up, not only the necessity of the *Law*
of Moses, but its sufficiency without any need of *Christ's*
Sacrifice, so casting off all dependance on his *Blood for Sal-*
vation. Both which the *Apostle* loads with such heavy
 consequences, † telling the *Judaizers* they were *faine from* † Gal. 5. 2;
Grace, and *Christ* would profit them nothing, or be of none
 effect to them; and the * *Deniers of the Resurrection*, that
 then is *Christ* not risen, they are yet in their Sins, their
Faith is vain, and so is the *Apostle's Preaching*, &c. as
 give us cause to think, had they prevailed, and become
 the common Profession in those Churches, that they
 would have rendred them Christians meerly in Name,
 but in Truth would have unchurched them. But in o-
 ther Churches, where they kept true to the Foundation,
 many did in those days build many great Errors thereup-
 on. At *Corinth*, * they built *Wood, Hay, and Stubble up-* * 1 Cor. 3.
on the Foundation; and fell some of them to hold, not
 only speculative Errors, but some very dangerous Tenets
 in practice: such as the † lawfulness of incestuous *Mar-* † 1 Cor. 5.
riages, esteemed, as may seem, and connived at, tho'
 not publickly preached up, as a thing indifferent, even
 by the *Pastors* themselves; and of * *Communicating in* * 1 Cor. 8.
Idol-Feasts, wherein several Members thought they did
 not sin, so long as they believed an † *Idol* is nothing. At † 1. 4. &
Colos, they were prone to superstition, to place Religion
 in uncommanded Abstinencies, such as *touch not, taste*
not, handle not, which were the *Doctrines* and *Devices*
of Men, Col. 2. 20, 21, 22. At *Ephesus* St. Paul fore-
 told, that *several* would arise, *speaking perverse Things*,
 Act. 20. 30. And at *Rome*, and abundance of Churches
 in the *Provinces* where the *Jews* had *Synagogues*; besides
 those rigid *Judaizers*, who deny'd the *Redemption* by
Christ, and the merit of his *Sacrifice*; there were others,
 who believed these, but yet maintain'd together with
 them the necessity of the *Mosaick Rites*, observing the
Jewish difference of Meats and Days, and teaching the *Gen-*
tiles to live as do the *Jews*, Rom. 14. 2, 5. & Gal. 2. 14.
 But amidst all these Errors, which were held, sometimes
 by smaller Parties and Factions, and sometimes by great-
 er numbers in the Churches, the *Apostles* preach'd to
 them,

them, to own the erroneous as Brethren, whom, upon the account of those great Truths which they held therein, *God had received*, Rom. 14. 3. to beware of *Schisms*, and *Divisions*, as things that shew'd *Carnal Professors*, 1 Cor. 3. 3. and to *keep the Bond of Peace*, Eph. 4. 3. And upon these Christian Grounds, and in correspondence to these *Apostolical Ordinances*, it is, that the *Protestants* of the opposite *Confessions*, are ready to Communicate with the *Lutherans*, notwithstanding their Errors of *Ubiquity* and *Consubstantiation*. And that the Champions of our own Church, have sundry times declared their readiness to Communicate, even with the Church of *Rome*, in any truly Christian thing, notwithstanding the Errors of Faith, which that Church has added to the Foundation: But that they have barr'd us all out, by imposing their Errors, and by so staining and polluting their Worship, that with a good Conscience we cannot joyn with them. And accordingly, whilst they were free to come, and till the Pope forbade them, the *Romanists* were † for many years admitted to our Publick Service, and Sacraments, notwithstanding their different Belief and Apprehensions, in the first part of *Queen Elizabeth's* Reign.

† Cambd.
Eliz. ad
An. 1570.

Quest. I suppose you speak this, of our uniting with them, only whilst their Errors are meer Errors of Faith, and consist in Opinion?

Ans. Yes; for 'tis not so, when they found any corrupt *Worship* thereupon; or break the *Unity of Church Society*, and make a *Schism*. But if, together with such *unfundamental Errors*, they preserve Union and have a faultless *Worship*, which they call us to joyn in; we must not separate for their Errors, whilst they keep them to themselves, and whilst we are under no necessity of sharing in them. And that we never are, whilst they do not impose them, but leave us at liberty, either to dissent, where their Errors are in little Matters; or to gainsay and confute them, where they are of more importance to Religion, and Mens Souls.

Quest. I think I see, when a Church errs so foully in *Faith*, that we ought to forsake her. But another ground of withdrawing our Communion, you said, is *Corruption of Worship*. And when is a Church so far corrupted in her *Worship*, that we may withdraw from it, or that we ought not to joyn in it?

Ans.

Ans. That may be, either in case of *intrinsic impediments*, in the matter of her Offices. Or, when good Prayers and Devotions are put up to God, but in an *unknown Language*.

Quest. When is she so far corrupted, in the very *matter of her Worship*, and Publick Services?

Ans. When she falls off, either from Worshipping the one true God; or by one Mediator, *Jesus Christ*; or mixes Sin in her Prayers, whereby Grace and Mercy are to be fought; or in her Sacraments of *Baptism*, or the *Lords Supper*, wherein that Grace and Mercy are sealed and convey'd. We cannot live Religiously, without Prayers; nor pray to any but the true God, except we pray like *Idolatrous Heathens*; nor Pray to him by any other, but by *Jesus Christ*; (the defective Prayers of Sinners needing to be expiated, as was † observed, before they are preferr'd, and not being acceptable from any other hands;) nor pray for any but innocent and holy things, if we would pray so, as may be for Christ to offer, or God to hear, and as becometh Saints; nor claim the benefit of his intercession for our Prayers, 'till we are Baptized, and made Members of his Church; nor shew our selves worthy of such a Saviour, and assure, as much as may be, the Blessings which we pray for, without partaking of the Lord's Supper. So that if any Church has embody'd Sin into her Service in these particulars, we cannot go along therewith, and concur in performing the necessary parts, and vital acts of Worship in her Communion, with a good Conscience. † Chap. 3.

Quest. So that if the Publick Offices of any Church, direct their Prayers and Adorations, not only to God, but also to Creatures, either Rational Beings, or senseless Images; or if they prefer not these Prayers to God, by *Jesus Christ* alone, but make use of other Mediators, as *Departed Saints*, or *Angels*; or if they pollute their Prayers, their Baptism, and the Lords Supper, by unlawful mixtures; the twisting of these Corruptions into her Worship, without any further Imposition, is enough to bar all good People from joyning with her in these Offices?

Ans. Yes; And authorize them to seek out for more holy and unpolled Offices, if the Providence of God has afforded them any Opportunities of being supply'd there-

therewith, from other lawful, and more Orthodox Ministers. For as we must be careful, publickly to Worship and serve God; so must we be as careful, so far as we can, to do it among those, *who offer up no sinful and forbidden Thing in service to him, which is not to honour and please him, but to affront and provoke him.*

Quest. But what if the Devotions themselves are good, and directed only unto God by *Jesus Christ*, but in a *strange Language*, which we do not understand. Were it enough to desert a Churches Service for that reason?

Ans. Yes; because God will have Prayers with the understanding, 1 Cor. 14. 15: 16. and God being a Spirit, receives such only, as *Christ* notes, *who worship him in Spirit*, which a Man doth not, whose Spirit is idle, and understands not what he says to God, *John* 4. 23, 24. So that if any Church locks up her Publick Prayers and Offices in an unknown Tongue, good People must seek out another, where they may offer up the same Services, in a Language which their Spirits can joyn in, and Worship, as the Scripture requires, *to Edification*, 1 Cor. 14. 26. We must not separate, as I said, from a sound Church, only because it seems less edifying. But we must separate, when there is no Devotion, but what is directly contrary to Edification.

Quest. If we may not allways separate, where there are real Faults in a Church; then much less for the dislike of *received Customs, Rites and Usages*, when confessedly, as you said, in indifferent matters?

Ans. Most certainly. To rend the Body, and make disturbance for light things, shews an ill Member in all Societies. Not to yield to an *innocent Custom*, as I noted before from *St. Paul*, shews a Man to be no lover of Peace, but a *lover of Contention*, 1 Cor. 11. 16. Nay, if any Man would shew himself a Catholick Christian, he must not only readily comply with the indifferent Rites and Usages of his own Church, which has Authority over him: but, as he has occasion to pass by them, or to converse among them, with the Usages of other Churches, or Christians, tho' very different from his own, so long as there is no sin therein. A Catholick Christian, must have a Catholick Spirit, and be ready to shew

shew that he owns all other Christians, till they are really broke off, or regularly cast out of *Christ's Church*, for Brethren and fellow-members : and never stick out from exercising with them the common Christianity, whereby all Christians serve and honour *Christ*, by reason of the particular Rites in any Church or Place, which are no offence to him.

Quest. If we may not lawfully separate from a Church, whose Constitution has some Faults, as it was in some Churches in the *Apostle's* times : I suppose when the Church it self is faultless in its Constitution, that we ought much less to separate from it, merely for the *ill* and *scandalous Lives* of its Members.

Ans. Most certainly. And accordingly *St. Paul* is most severe against the Schisms at *Corinth* : tho' in the same Church, he complains of the horrible prophaneness of many among them, who came drunk to the *Lord's Supper*, 1 Cor. 11. 21. and of the *Wraths, Envyings, Strifes, Back-bitings, Swellings, Tumults, unrepented Uncleanneſs, Lasciviousneſs, and Fornication* ; for which he feared God would humble him, when he came among them, 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21. The Church of God in all times, under the *Ancient Patriarchs*, and afterwards in the Nation of the *Jews*, was a mixt Society of good and bad Livers. And in Christianity it is compared to a † *Net*, that catches Fish † Mat. 13. of every kind ; and to a * *Field*, sown with *Tares*, as well * Ver. 24 as *Wheat*, and wherein both must grow together, till the 47. Great and General *Harvest*. 'Tis always its misfortune 25, 30. here, together with some true Saints, to have some Hypocritical Professors. So that were we to separate from a good Church for this Cause, we must separate from all Churches, and could hold Communion with no Church on Earth. And therefore Men must never think of leaving a good Church, because it happens to have some corrupt People, or scandalous Ministers. From the Sins we must separate, which give the scandal ; but unite, and adhere to the Church, which condemns them : the good must not desert it, because the bad will not obey, and be ruled by it.

Quest. But what if it doth not use the *Rod of Discipline* to correct them ?

Ans. We are not to separate notwithstanding, as the *Apostles* told the Churches, where the Sins were too strong, and the Sinners too numerous for Discipline, or the *Pastors* too remiss in using it. Thus the *Pastors* were at *Corinth*, who, instead of mourning over the incestuous Person, were rather puff'd up with him, 1 Cor. 5. 2. And yet for all this, St. Paul would not bear, to hear of any tendencies towards *Schism* among them, 1 Cor. 3. 3. Thus also it was at *Pergamus*, where several were infected, with the scandalous Doctrines of the *Nicolaitans*, Rev. 2. 15. and at *Thyatira*, where the followers of *Jezabel* the False Prophetess, were suffer'd to go on in their Spiritual Fornication, and Sacrificing to Idols, v. 20. And in other Churches, which either out of necessity, or neglect, relaxed the reins of Discipline, and tolerated scandalous Persons, in the *Apostle's* own times. But yet no Plea for separation, would ever be admitted by them on this pretence. In these cases, the Church must answer, for the neglect of its power; and scandalous Sinners, for the scandals which they give: but as for any private Christians, whilst they neither help on their scandals, nor imitate them, their Consciences are not defiled with them. Besides, the growth of *Schism*, has been one of the greatest weakners of Discipline, one Congregation admitting and harbouring Members, when another rejects them. And therefore, to pretend want of Discipline for separation, is not only a most disingenuous thing, but the way to bring Discipline, which they complain of as too little already, to be none at all.

Quest. By what you have discoursed on this Point, I perceive that we are never Guilty of *Schism*, in separating from any Church, when we have just cause. But that all breaking off, from any part of *Christ's* Body, is *Schismatical*, which is Causeless.

Ans. Yes. And so is all Driving others into Separation, by imposing unrighteous usurpations and inbreachments, or sinful Terms, as the Condition of their Communion. And then, which is the last thing that I shall note concerning it, *Schism* from any Churches is most compleat, when we do not only separate from their Religious Assemblies and Divine Offices; but withal, deny them

them to be Members of Christ's Body, or Parts of the Catholick Church. This is the Highest step in Séparation, and leaves not the least Ground for Church-Communion. For 'tis only the *Members of Christ's Body*, that must Communicate under him their Head, in the proper Offices of Christianity; and the Communion of *Saints* profess'd in the Creed, is only within the compass of the Catholick Church. So that if we cut off any Societies, from being Members of Christ and a true Church; we must have no more Communion with them, than if they were profess'd *Heathens*. And this was the Sacrilegious Breach of the *Donatists*, and *Novatians*; the Consummation of whose *Schism*, was their confining the Catholick Church to their own Party, and allowing no Church, no Sacraments, or Promise of Salvation, but among themselves.

Quest. There remains yet one instance, of the Communion of the *Primitive* Christians mentioned by St. Luke, viz. *Continuing in the Apostle's Fellowship*, Act. 2. 42. I pray you what is meant by that?

Ans. Owning their Authority, and continuing under their Government. They were appointed by Christ, as his Deputies, to Govern his Church; and therefore adhering to them, as the Delegates of Christ, is call'd living in their Fellowship.

Quest. But how can we live in their Fellowship, and adhere to their Government, now they are dead?

Ans. By adhering to, and owning the Authority of our own Bishops, who are their Successors, and rule the Church in their stead. And the Communion of all other Orthodox Bishops of other Churches, mutually ratifying Church Acts, and receiving or rejecting each others Members, whereof I have given some account already. Christ told the Apostles, that he would be Present with them, to the end of the World, Mat. 28. 20. Being present with their Successors, he calls being Present with them. And in like sort, keeping Fellowship with our Lawful Bishops, who are their Successors, is keeping Fellowship with them. He that one sends, say the Jews, is as himself. And accordingly, when Christ had sent out his Apostles, he tells them, *he that receiveth you, receiveth me,*

me, Mat. 10. 40. and he that receives whomsoever I send, receiveth me, Joh. 13. 20. And the Apostle commends the Galatians, for that they received him, not only as an Angel of God, but as Christ Jesus, Gal. 4. 14. And St. Ignatius, that Blessed Martyr, and contemporary of the Apostles, applauds the Trallians, that they were subject to their Bishop, as to Jesus Christ, and to the Presbytery, as to the Apostles. In Scripture Account, and legal Estimate, that is done to any Persons, which is done to their Substitutes and Representatives. And thus keeping Fellowship and Subjection, to the Bishops of the Church in all Ages, who were at first sent and commissioned by the Apostles, and empowered to send and ordain others at all times, is holding Fellowship, and paying subjection to the Apostles themselves, and by them to Christ Jesus.

Quest. This then is one Part of the Communion of Saints, to live subject to our own Orthodox Bishops, and in the Communion and Fellowship of all other Orthodox Bishops, not suffering our selves to be drawn away by such as would seduce us, but adhering to them against all Schismatical Opposers?

Ans. Yes. Obey them that have the Rule over you, and submit your selves, Heb. 13. 17. And mark those that cause Divisions, and avoid them, Rom. 16. 17. Be their Pretences, and Appearance, what they will, if they lead us into Schism, and an unnecessary Rejecting of our Lawful Governours, or of other Orthodox and Lawful Bishops, God hath not sent, nor doth his Spirit go along with them. That cannot lead to Schism, it is the Author of Peace, not of Confusion, 1 Cor. 14. 33. And it will not put us upon a needless rejecting of our Spiritual Governours, since Adherence to them in the Apostle's Days, as I noted before, was made a Test of discerning True Spirits from False ones. *We are of God, he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us: Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error,* 1 Joh. 4. 6.

Quest. Indeed, if all true Christians must maintain Unity of Society, as you shew'd above, or keep together as one Body, and preserve the Communion of Saints in the Catholick Church; it will nearly concern them to keep up Communion and Fellowship with all other Orthodox and lawful Bishops, and not to receive their Schismatics,

or Excommunicates, or do any thing which is justly censurable as a Breach thereof. But as for the Rules and Orders of Particular Churches, if a Man is careful to Believe, and Practise *Christ's* own Laws and Doctrines; is not that enough to make him a good Christian, except he likewise submit to his own particular Church-Rulers, and peaceably conform to their innocent Constitutions, and Rules of Discipline?

Ans. No. For this is one of his Laws, *to obey those that have the Rule over us, and watch for our Souls, and to submit our selves,* Heb. 13. 17. He orders them to take care, that all things in his Worship, be done decently, and to Edification; 1 Cor. 14. 26, 40. And he requires us to obey, and submit to their ordering: A good Christian, is not only one that believes and professes the *Christian Religion*, but is also a Member of the *Christian Church*. And they cannot be good Church-members, who will not submit, so far as conscientiously they may, to their own Church-Governours, nor Communicate in their Church-Offices; more than they are, who will unwarrantably break Communion with other Churches.

Quest. I see the *Communion of Saints*, implies their Communion in *Christian Doctrine, Worship, and Government*. But doth it not also imply *Communicating*, not only in Affections, but in all *Good Offices, in Alms and outward Things*?

Ans. Yes; *to do Good, and to Communicate, forget not,* Heb. 13. 16. And the Receiving their charitable Contributions, *St. Paul* calls *taking upon him the Gift, and Fellowship or Communion, of Ministering to the Saints,* 2 Cor. 8. 4. In the extream distress of the *Jerusalem Christians* at first, this communication of Alms was wonderful: For all that were Rich, sold their Possessions, and put them into a Common Stock, to be distributed by the Apostles, as every one had need, Act. 2. 44, 45. and c. 4. 33, 34. And in other places, where they did not take this course, yet was Communicating with their poorer Brethren, as in all good Offices, so particularly in outward Things, the Profession of all Christians. Their Rule was, as they had opportunity, to do Good unto all, but especially to those of the Household of Faith, Gal. 6. 10. And to do good to these more particularly, when they travelled

velled about as Strangers, and fled from place to place,
 * Rom. 12. for the Faith of Christ: which is the Charity and * Hospi-
 13. 1 Pet. tality of the Scriptures, so much magnified.

4 9. Heb. Quest. When any Saints then of Foreign Countries, are
 13. 2. forced to fly, and come among us for Christ's sake, to
 entertain them in our Houses, and communicate to them
 of our Substance, which is here professed, is of Great Ac-
 count with God?

Ans. Yes, of High Account. For it is one of those
 Good Deeds, which Christ will expressly mention in our
 behalf at the last Judgment. Come ye Blessed, inherit the
 Kingdom: for I was a Stranger, and ye took me in, Mat.
 25. 34, 35. And therefore St. Paul, when he tells us of
 distributing to the necessities of Saints, reminds us par-
 ticularly, of being given to Hospitality, Rom. 12. 13.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Of the Forgiveness of Sin.

The Contents.

What Sin is. Of wilful sins. Of sins of Ignorance, Sur-reption, Passion. Forgiveness of sin is the Release of its Punishment, When Eternal Punishments are remitted, Present and Temporal are often exacted. What is the Time of Relaxing these Punishments. Remission of all Sins, but Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. And wilful Apostacy from Christianity. Wilful sins forgiven, when we Repent, and forgive others. Sins of Ignorance and inadvertence, upon our Charity to others. This forgive-ness outwardly dispensed in Baptism. The Eucharist. And Sacerdotal Absolution. The Power of the Keys lies in Retaining as well as Absolving, which ought to beget a just dread of Excommunication. What is meant by our Forgiving sins. What use we are to make of the Forgiveness of Sins.

Quest. **W**HAT is the Tenth Article of the Creed?

Ans. I Believe the Forgiveness of Sins.

Quest. What is Sin?

Ans. The Breach of a Commandment, or a Transgres-sion of some Law of God, committing what his Law forbids, or omitting what it enjoins us. *Sin is the Trans-gression of the Law, 1 Joh. 3. 4.* And all the Laws of God, which we transgress in sinning against him, are contain'd in Holy Scripture.

Quest. Then we never offend God, nor shall suffer for any thing, but what the Scripture has forbid, and against which we can produce some Law out of it?

Ans. No; for Sin is not imputed, where there is no Law, Rom. 5. 13. And it must always be a Law that worketh Wrath, i. e. makes us liable to suffer it, For where there is no Law, there is no Transgression, Rom. 4.

15. *The strength of sin is the Law*, saith the *Apostle*, 1 Cor. 15. 56. and the *Law enter'd ere sin did abound*, Rom. 5. 20.

Quest. To prove any thing Sinless and Lawful then, it is not necessary to produce a Law, or Example for it, since a Law commanding it, would render it not barely Lawful, but necessary; but it is enough that there be no Law against it?

Ans. Very right; for till a Law forbids a thing, there is no sin in it.

Quest. What is a *Wilful Sin*?

Ans. A Sin against Knowledge, or, doing what we know to be displeasing to God. And this, either, when we are aware of the Evil, at the Time when we commit it; or should have been so, but that we are grossly negligent, or have accustomed our selves to it, which makes us sin without observing that we do so.

Quest. If a Man by custom brings himself to Swear, or Lye, or the like, without thinking of it, his Sin you say is wilful, for all he doth not bethink himself in committing it?

Ans. No doubt of it; for he wilfully contracted this Custom and Habit, which is so far from being an excuse for his Sin, that it is one of the greatest aggravations thereof. The Habit of Sin, is called the *Law of Sin*, Rom. 7. 23. and the *Body of Death*, ver. 24.

Quest. What if a Man has such a mind to a Sin, that he will not see it, but checks and stifles all Thought that would arise in his mind against it? Nay, perhaps endeavours to deceive himself, and come to a Persuasion, that there is no Fault, or, it may be, some Praise therein.

Ans. He is a wilful Offender indeed, because his own Will makes him ignorant, as it did the *Pharisees* and other *Jews*, who were wilfully Blind, Mat. 13. 15.

Quest. When is a wilful Sin against Conscience?

Ans. When 'tis acted against the present checks of our own minds, and under Fears and Relentings.

Quest. And when is a Sin against Conscience, called *Deliberate*, which, I suppose, is a higher pitch of *Wilfulness*?

Ans.

Ans. When 'tis committed after Fears and Debates, and we consider'd and disputed with our selves for some time, whether to do it or no, before we ventur'd on it.

Quest. What is a sin of Ignorance?

Ans. When we do an Evil thing, not knowing it to be a sin, nor seeing its sinfulness.

Quest. Doth Ignorance excuse any Offences?

Ans. Yes, some it doth; viz, When Men are not ignorant, through culpable Neglects, nor blinded by wicked Lusts and Passions. For in this case 'tis said, *Christ can have compassion on the Ignorant, and Erroneous*, Heb. 5. 2. But when they have no mind to see a Thing, nor care to find it out, that Ignorance is faulty, because it is chargeable on their own Wills.

Quest. What say you, when their Judgments are resolv'd on the wrong side, and they act under Erroneous Opinions? Are they not excusable in any Actions, so long as they only follow their Conscience?

Ans. No; except their Conscience Errs so pitifully, as to be reasonably qualified for excuse. The Jews followed their Consciences, when they crucified Christ, Acts 3. 17. and 1 Cor. 2. 8. but yet God esteem'd them wicked Murderers, Act. 7. 52. Paul verily thought, that he ought to Persecute the Church, Act. 26. 9. But in that he declares, he was the greatest of Sinners, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 15. The times are coming, saith our Lord, that they who kill you will think that therein they do God service, Joh. 16. 2. But yet God would take vengeance on them, for the Blood of these Righteous Persons, Mat. 23. 35. 'Tis no sufficient warranty in what a Man doth, that he follows his Conscience, except he take care to have a right Conscience; or, when 'tis wrong, except it errs only through Misfortunes, not out of a wilful Neglect, a wicked Lust, or an unteachable Temper.

Quest. What is a Sin of inadvertence?

Ans. When in the general we know a thing to be a sin, but are not free at the time of acting it, to consider, and reflect upon its sinfulness. This generally happens, because we do the Evil suddenly, ere we can bethink our selves, whence they are called sins of *Surreption*. i. e. which

which steal upon us unawares, and sins of *Surprise*. And thus it falls out, in the many sudden envious, lustful, repining, or otherwise evil Thoughts, or Desires; the beginnings of Anger, the rash Words and Censures, which Good People are Guilty of. All which, till they can come to observe them, if then they are careful to check and repress the same, are pitiable inadvertences and surprises, which, because we are all apt daily to fall into more or less, are call'd sins of *Daily incurision*.

Quest. What think you of sins of *Passion*, when either Mens own Consciences, or other Friendly Monitors, tell them that they are doing ill, but they go on notwithstanding, because *Passion* is strong, and Lust, or Anger, hurries them away, being very high, in them?

Ans. These are not perfectly wilful, because, when their Passions are at such height, their Wills are captivated, and have little Power over them for that time. But they are punishable, as wilful sins are, because it is Mens voluntary Fault, if they do not mortifie all such inordinate *Passion*; and they that belong to *Christ*, must not suffer *Passion* to arise so high, that it can captivate and reign in them. *They that are Christ's, have Crucified the Flesh, with the Affections, or Passions, and Lusts, Gal. 5. 24.*

Quest. From what you have said, I perceive what *Sin* is: but what is meant by the *Forgiveness* of it?

Ans. A Release of the Punishment, which is due thereto. For then God forgives a sin, when he acquits Men of the Punishment of it. And because this is a passing over sins, as if they had never been, and taking no notice of them; it is called *covering sins*, and *not imputing them*, Rom. 4. 7, 8.

Quest. What are the Punishments due to Sin?

Ans. Death, and Diseases, and all the Miseries of this World. But especially the *Eternal Torments of Hell Fire* in the next.

Quest. The *Eternal Pains of Hell*, must needs be acquitted, when a Sinner is pardon'd. For we can never think any sin to be pardon'd, whilst the Sinner is eternally suffering for it. But when the everlasting Punishments

of

of the other Life are releas'd, are all the Temporal In-
 flictions in this Life struck off too?

Ans. No, for *Death is the Wages of sin*; * and that * Rom. 6.
 still is all Mens Portion. And when Men by their sins ^{23.}
 have greatly dishonoured God, or given great Scandal
 unto others, to manifest the Justice of his Providence,
 God oft-times here chastiseth them by present Judgments,
 yea, even after they have Repented, and he has there-
 upon remitted to them all eternal Pains. Thus, when
 Nathan told Penitent David, that God, seeing his Repen-
 tance, *had put away his sin*, so that as to the last account,
 he would be acquitted: Yet, *because thereby he had given*
occasion to the Enemies of God to Blaspheme, he should be
 punish'd here, and the Child should die for it, 2 Sam. 12.
 13, 14. And at Corinth, several of those who on the
 score of their Repentance, *should not be condemned with*
the Wicked World at last: Yet, for their scandalous Pro-
 phanations of the Lord's Supper, were sickly, and weak,
 and fell asleep at present, 1 Cor. 11. 30, 32. And the
 Man of God from Judah, being pitiably seduced by a
 Dissembling Prophet, without any thing that appears of
 an Evil intent, and having first faithfully, and boldly
 declared God's Message against Jeroboam's Altar, we may
 reasonably hope, was mercifully spared as to the other
 World. But yet here God met him by the way, and
 devoured him by a Lion, for yielding to a Seducer, to eat
 Bread against the Word of the Lord, 1 King. 13. And
 this ought mightily to restrain us all, from acting any
 great Dishonour to God, or crying Offences, for which
 God may judge us in our Persons, Estates, or Families,
 in this World, when upon our true Repentance, he ac-
 quits us in the next. Penitence is not so good a Preser-
 vative against the sting of these Sins, as Innocence is. For
 such Offences, do always justly expole us to Temporal
 Calamities, and sometimes make it necessary for us that
 we should be severely corrected for the same in this
 World. Which consideration ought to restrain all, who
 regard either their own, or their Families welfare in this
 World, from ever being guilty of them.

Quest. When are these Punishments relaxed, and what
 is the time of Pardon?

Ans.

Ans. The solemn, full, and irreverfible declaration of it, is at the *Day of Judgment*. But before that, God pardons the Sins of good Men in this Life, giving them a general pardon of all Sins in *Baptism*, and of all particular Failures afterwards, as they repent of them. So on *David's Repentance*, for the matter of *Uriah*, *Nathan* told him, *God had put away his Sin*, 2 Sam. 12. 13.

Quest. Is this forgiveness in this World perfect, and irreverfible, fo that when once any fins are struck off, they are never more placed to account ?

Ans. No ; but limited, and fufpended on Terms, viz. *Mens perseverance in repentance* ; for, if after their pardon they fall off, and relapse into the fame wickedness, they fhall be unpardon'd all again, and ftand accountable for all former Transgreffions. If the *Righteous Man turn from his Righteousness*, to iniquity, faith God in *Ezekiel*, all the Righteousness he hath done, fhall not be mention'd to him, but in his Sins that he hath fin'd, fhall he die, Ezek. 18. 24. & 33. 12, 13. And when the Debtor, to whom his Lord had pardon'd all his great Sums, had render'd himfelf unworthy of that grace, by his merciless ufage of a small Debtor among his fellow Servants, his incens'd Lord cancel'd the Pardon, and exacted all the difpunged Accounts. And fo, fays *Christ*, will my Heavenly Father do with you in like cafe, Mat. 18. 24, 27, 30, 34, 35.

Quest. Do we believe the forgiveness of all Sins ?

Ans. Yes ; except the Sin againft the Holy Ghost, and wilful *Apostacy* from the Faith of *Christ*, for which there is no forgiveness.

Quest. I have feen already, that there is no Pardon for *Blasphemy againft the Holy Ghost*. But is there none alfo, for wilful *Apostacy* from *Christianity* ?

Ans. No ; for if we fin willfully, i. e. by wilful *Apostacy*, after we have received the knowledge of the Truth, there remains no more Sacrifice for Sin, i. e. *Christ's Sacrifice* is not defigned to expiate fuch Offence, Heb. 10. 26.

Quest. Is that Sinning willfully, wilful *Apostacy* from *Christianity* ?

Ans.

Ans. Yes. For these Sinners, saith the *Apostle*; tread under foot the Son of God, i. e. affirm Christ to be still in the Grave, not risen from the Dead; and count the blood of the Covenant, or Christ's Blood, an unholy Thing, i. e. as the Blood of a Malefactor; and say it was justly shed; and do despite to the Spirit of Grace, i. e. despite the Holy Ghost, which confirm'd Christianity, and reject all his Miracles as *Satanical* delusions, v. 29. So that these Sinners were plainly *Apostates*, who ceased to own, and had begun to accuse Christ, as the *Jews* and *Heathens* did. And the same Apostacy St. Paul speaks of in another place, when he tells us, if Christians fall away, i. e. from their Christianity, whereby they Crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, or joyn in Condemning him with his Crucifiers, it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance, Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

Quest. But all other Sins you say, we may believe, and trust to have the pardon of?

Ans. Yes; thro' the *Merits* of Christ, and the *Mercy* of God. So Christ Commissions his *Apostles*, to Preach Repentance, and Remission of Sins, to all Nations, Luke 24. 47. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins, 1 John 2. 1, 2. And all manner of Sin and Blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto men, but that against the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven, Mat. 12. 31.

Quest. You would have no Sinners then to despair of Mercy, or to think their Sins greater, than Christ's Merits, or God's Grace, and too big to be forgiven?

Ans. No, by no means. For Christ, by his most precious death, has gain'd a full Pardon for the greatest Sins, and sends out his *Apostles* to Proclaim it to the greatest Sinners. David was guilty of *Adultery*, and *Murder*; Paul was a cruel and bloody Persecutor, and Blasphemer; Peter was perjuriously false, and denyed his Master. But

† all these were forgiven, and none need, or must despair, as if, when they Repent, God had not pardon enough in store. † 2 Sam. 12, 13. 1 Tim. 1. 13, 16. Mat. 26. 70.

Quest. These, indeed, are instances of the greatest Sins. But is there forgiveness for them, when they are committed with the most aggravating Circumstances?

Ans.

Ans. Yes. For David's Murder, and Adultery, was with much † *deliberation* and *contrivance*, and against † 2 Sam. 11. so many struglings and reluctances, that thereby he became almost quite * *hardned*, and of a seared Conscience. † Psal. 51. And Peter's denial, was repeated several times, and † Luke 22. those † considerably distant, to allow space enough for remorle, and that too with false Oaths, and bitter imprecations. But both these obtain'd mercy, on their true repentance.

Quest. You say on true Repentance. Is all this forgiveness then, upon some Terms and Conditions ?

Ans. Yes ; for God's grants of Grace are, as in consideration of Christ's Sacrifices, so also of our Faith and Repentance. And therefore neither to Infidels, nor to impenitent Persons.

Quest. Upon what terms must we believe, that God will forgive us any willful Sins ?

Ans. When we repent of them, and forgive others.

Quest. Will he not pardon them, till we repent and amend them ?

Ans. No ; for to all the willful Sinners of the World, the Apostles were to Preach Repentance, and Remission of Sins. And of these 'tis said, *be that confesses, and forsakes his Sins, shall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

Quest. But when we have repented, and left these Sins, will he not forgive us still, unless we forgive others, that have trespass'd against us ?

Ans. No ; there is no forgiveness, neither for impenitent, nor uncharitable Persons. For if ye forgive men their Trespases, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you : But if ye forgive not men their Trespases, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive you, Mat. 6. 14, 15. And therefore when we pray for forgiveness, our Lord allows us to do it only upon these terms. *Forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that Trespas against us.*

Quest. What if we have wronged any Persons ? is it not enough towards forgiveness to do so no more ?

Ans. No, it is not ; but withal, we must make Restitution and amends, for the wrong which we have done already. If thou bring thy Gift to the Altar, and there remembreth thy Brother hath ought against thee ; leave there

there thy Gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come, and offer thy Gift, Mat. 5. 23, 24.

Quest. I see we must hope to have forgiveness of our Sins of willfulness, and also of our Sins of Passion, which you shew'd to be of like guilt with them, only upon our true Repentance, and amendment of them. But upon what terms, shall our slips of ignorance, and inadvertence be pardon'd, since they are never perfectly amended, but hang about us more or less, as long as we are in this World?

Ans. Upon our Prayers for Pardon of the same, and our great Charity to other Men, especially to their Souls, in endeavouring their Conversion, and Salvation. And therefore that St. Peter recommends above all other Virtues, and for this Reason. *Above all things, have fervent Charity among your selves, for Charity shall cover the multitude of Sins,* 1 Pet. 4. 8. And if any of you err, and one convert him, let him know, that he, who converts a Sinner from the Error of his way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins, Jam. 5. 19, 20.

Quest. For whose sake doth Almighty God allow us all this Benefit of Forgiveness?

Ans. For Jesus Christ's, who, as you have seen, dyed for our Sins, and gave his Blood a Ransom, to purchase for us all this Pardon of them. He is set forth a propitiation for the remission of Sins that are pass'd, thro' Faith in his Blood, Rom. 3. 25. And then we shall receive all this Mercy for his sake, when, with the dispositions before express'd, we devoutly pray to God for it in his Name.

Quest. By the promises of the Gospel, I see that this forgiveness is assured to all Christians, upon the terms which you have described. But is it in any Signs, and Tokens, outwardly dispensed to them?

Ans. Yes; both in the Holy Sacraments, and in Sacramental Absolution. Which ways of ministring this forgiveness, as well as the forgiveness it self, are noted in some Ancient Creeds: This Article being thus profess'd in St. † Cyprian's Form at Baptism, I believe the Remission of Sins by the Church.

† Ep. ad Januar.
Eccl. & Ep.
ad Magnum.
Ep. 69, 70. Ed.
Oxon.

Quest.

Quest. Is this forgiveness dispensed to us in the Sacrament of Baptism?

Ans. Yes; and that most amply, the water of Baptism washing off the stain of all former Sins. *Be Baptized, and wash away thy Sins,* said Ananias to Saul, Acts 22. 16. *Repent, and be Baptized for the Remission of Sins,* said St. Peter to the Jews, Acts 2. 38. *And he hath saved us by the Laver of Regeneration, i. e. the water of Baptism, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost,* Tit. 3. 5. So that whatever pollutions Men had before upon them, if they come to Baptism, with true Faith and Repentance, they are thereby made clean again.

Quest. Is it also dispensed in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper?

Ans. Yes; it after the Baptismal cleansing, they relapse, and contract new guilt; in the Lord's Supper they are admitted to renew the same Covenant of Grace again, and seal the Pardon of it. For therein Christ gives us his own Blood, which, as he says particularly, *was shed for the Remission of Sins,* Mat. 26. 28. He entertains us there at his own Table, which is an open profession to all worthy comers, that he is reconciled to them, and receives them again as Friends. And therefore, when any Baptized Christians are startled, and terrified with the Conscience of their Sins, let them repair to that Holy Sacrament, to seal, and assure the forgiveness of them, But let them come with Faith, and Repentance, and Reconciliation to their Brethren; which, as I said, are the Terms of our being Forgiven. For the Holy Sacraments dispense this Forgiveness to none, but such as worthily receive them, and those they do cleanse from all former Pollutions.

Quest. Is there also a dispensation of this Pardon, in Priestly Absolution?

Ans. Yes; for therein Christ has authoriz'd his Ministers, who act in his place and stead, to pronounce the Sentence of Pardon upon all true Penitents, and bid them expect, that what they regularly thus declare on Earth, he will make good in his Sovereign Court in Heaven. He breathed on them, and said, *receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever Sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whose soever Sins ye retain, they are retained,* John 20. 22, 23.

And

And therefore when a true Penitent hears his Pardon solemnly pronounced, by an Officer, whom God has deputed and Commission'd for it, he may quiet his heart, as one whose case is judged, and firmly hope that God will pronounce the same at the last Judgment. But this, I say, he must do only after true Repentance. For 'tis only *the Ministry of Reconciliation*, saith *St. Paul*, which *God hath committed unto us*, 2 Cor. 5. 18. but the direction, and ratification of it, he has reserved to himself; and then only he ratifies what his Ministers do, when they pronounce according to his own Rules and Orders. So that if the Priest pronounce by mistake, and absolve the impenitent, God will judge right, tho' he judge wrong, and Condemn at last, whom he had before erroneously absolved in his Judgment.

Quest. *Christ* lays, *what they retain, shall be retained*; as well, as *what they remit, shall be remitted*. Ought not that to beget in all Christians, a great dread of Excommunication, and Reverence for Church Censures?

Ans. Yes, questionless, when they proceed upon just Cause; for then *Christ* will maintain the Honour of his Deputies, and make good their sentence. *He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me*, Luke 10. 16. If any Offender will not bear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen man, and a Publican, Mat. 18. 17. In these Acts, what his Ministers do regularly, and according to his Direction, they do it as representing him, by virtue of his Commission and Authority, which, having given, to be sure he will stand by. And accordingly *St. Paul*, and the Church-Governours at *Corinth* under him, exercising their Power by virtue of *Christ's* Commission, Declares, that both in binding, and relaxing or forgiving, he acted with the Power, and in the Person or place of *Christ*, 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. and 2 Cor. 2. 10.

Quest. Do all Censures of the Church then, where the Truth is on its side, cut Men off, as from the Church, or from its Communion, which is his Body, so from *Jesus Christ*, who is the Head of it?

Ans. All those do, which are passed for such sins or errors, as are Damnable by the Tenor of *Christ's* own Laws.

† Apolog. own Rules, and, as † Tertullian says, are a true anticipation, or Fore-hand Draught of the great Judgment. And when his Officers only pronounce, and say after him; there is no doubt, but that he will confirm what they have pronounced in his Name.

c. 39.

Quest. But from what you have formerly discoursed, I perceive that some things in Religion, being against the Prime, and Fundamental Doctrines, are so Damnable in themselves, as not to be capable of any Favour or Allowances. And that others, being only against inferior Truths, are Damnable only as accompanied with an Evil Mind, but capable withal of being incurred under pardonable Circumstances. Now in these last Points, many Persons, who mean well, and serve *Christ* sincerely, in the main and essentials of a Christian, may yet be unhappily mislead into wrong Opinions, or Practices. And if for their fixedness, and obstinacy in these, they happen to be cast out of any Church; do you think they are always cut off from *Christ* too, and that he will Finally *Anathematize*, and condemn them in his Sentence?

Ans. No. For the Church, as all humane Judges, being unable to see into Men's Hearts, gives sentence in these cases, according to outward Actions. But *Christ* in his Judgment of them, looks also at the Mind and Heart of the Actors: Rateing exactly, not only the Punishableness of the Offences; but also the Degrees of voluntary and involuntary, which makes a Pardonableness or Punishableness of the Offenders. And making these Allowances on such scores, as fall not under their Notice; 'tis reasonable to believe, that he will still own and receive several compassionably mislead, who are cast out on these accounts by the Churches Censures.

Quest. This validity and effect of Church-Censures, you say, is when they proceed according to *Christ's own Rules*, and upon just cause. But if they bind where the Gospel says they should loose, and Excommunicate against Reason; I suppose those Censures are meer Scarecrows, that may serve to make a show, but bring no hurt with them?

Ans.

Ans. Very true. *Blessed are ye, says our Saviour, when Men shall separate you from their Company, and expunge or cast out your Name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake: for so persecuted their Fathers the Prophets. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for your Reward is great in Heaven, Luke 6. 22, 23.* If good Christians are Excommunicated in any Church, for not going against the Scriptures, and complying with it in ill things, as poor Protestants are by the Romish Church, they lose nothing thereby with God, who will not ratifie a wrong sentence, but will increase their Reward, for having bravely suffer'd in his Cause.

Quest. By what you have said, I see how God forgives Sins. But when they are committed against us, we are bid to *forgive them too*, and that, as we our selves hope to be forgiven. I pray you what doth that imply?

Ans. Not our remitting Future Punishments, which lie at God's Mercy, not in ours. Nor always that we sit still, without offering to defend our selves, when we are assaulted; or to seek redress, when we are injured. But only that we bear no malice to them in our hearts, and if the case require Redress, that we seek it not in Spiteful ways, and that, beside the Reparation of our own Wrong, we aim not at our Adversary's Prejudice, nor seek his Hurt afterwards, nor Pray to God, or to the Magistrate for Vengeance, as the Jews might to ease an angry mind, when we are able to do no more against him our selves.

Quest. What use must we make of this Belief, of the *Forgiveness of Sins*?

Ans. Admire the Mercy of God, who can forgive such Profligate, and Provoking Offenders. And the wonderful love of *Jesus Christ*, who could die to procure this Forgiveness, for his utter Enemies. And not despair of Mercy, but stedfastly hope that there is place of Pardon after any of our sins. And above all, to shew true Repentance, and forgive others, and perform all those things, which are the Condition and Terms of Forgiveness, thereby to secure it to our selves.

Quest. And when we are once forgiven, may we embolden our selves, from God's readiness to forgive, to Repeat our sins?

Ans. No, by no means. *Shall we continue in Sin, that Grace may abound in pardoning?* God forbid, Rom. 6. 1, 2. *Now thou art made whole, sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon thee,* said our Saviour, John 5. 14. Such ingratitude, and abuse of Grace, is not only most provoking to the Spirit, and tempts him to withdraw from us: and calls down from God heavier, and surer Punishments: But also it brings in force against us all the old scores, which were all struck off, as I said, only on presumption of our Perseverance in repenting of them.

C H A P. VIII.

Of the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life Everlasting

The Contents.

The Resurrection not meerly of our Spirits from sin, but of our Bodies from the Grave. This to be brought about by the Almighty Power of God. The Perfections of Glorified Bodies, viz. Immortality, Spirituality, and Glory. The Bodies of the Wicked Immortal. And exquisitely sensible. Some Inferences from the Resurrection of our Bodies. Good Souls carried straight-way into a Place of Bliss. Of Eternal Life, wherein there is Full and unmixed Happiness. Of the satisfaction of their Senses. Their clear and distinct Knowledge. Perfect Holiness. And without Reluctance. Blissful Companions. Perfection of Love and Kindness. Honour, and Eminence of Place. All these to be enjoy'd in the Highest Heavens, without satiety, or weariness. For evermore. Of the miseries of the Damned, in Tormenting Passions. The worm of Conscience. Fire and Flames. Disgrace, Under all which, no favour of God. No company, but of Tormenting Devils, and damned Spirits. None to console, when they cannot relieve. No rest and sleep, for Recruit of Spirits. No end of their miseries. The Use of this.

Quest. What is the Eleventh Article of the Creed?

Ans. I believe the Resurrection of the Body.

Quest. May not the Resurrection be interpreted, only of a Spiritual Resurrection from sin?

Ans. So some taught of old, as St. Paul testifies, saying the Resurrection is passed already, i. e. when Men rose from a State of sin, to the fear of God; and these, says he, get credit, and overthrow the Faith of some, 1 Tim. 2. 18. But the Resurrection which we expect,

is a *Resurrection of the Body*. Our Bodies, after we have laid them down by Death, shall at the Day of Judgment, be quickned, and raised up again. Then, *all that are in the Graves shall hear Christ's voice, and come forth, they that have done good, to the Resurrection of Life, and they that have done evil, to the Resurrection of Damnation*, Joh. 5. 28, 29. *This mortal Body must put on Immortality, and this Corruptible must put on Incorruption*, that so all that being revived, which Death destroyed, *Death may be swallowed up in Victory*, 1 Cor. 15. 53, 54.

Quest. The Resurrection of a Body, which had been crumbled into Dust, seemed an incredible thing when it was preach'd at first: *When the Philosophers heard of a Resurrection, some mocked*, Act. 17. 32. What can make it credible, or fit to be Believed?

Ans. The Omnipotent Power of God, when that is engaged for it. For no one can think it impossible, for God to raise up a Body out of dust, who at first made it out of dust, yea, who raised all things out of nothing. *Ye err*, saith our Saviour to the *Sadduces*, about the Resurrection, *not knowing the Power of God*, Mat. 22. 29. And this Power, he has given us a sensible proof of; by raising up Christ. *If Christ be preached, that he rose from the Dead, how say some among you, that there is no Resurrection of the Dead*; i. e. in regard his Rising is such an irrefragable instance, and example of it? 1 Cor. 15. 12.

Quest. Shall the Bodies of the Saints, be raised up by the Power of the Holy Ghost?

Ans. Yes; he that now makes them his *Temples*, by displaying in them his *Holiness*, shall at last display in them his *Omnipotence*, breathing into their scatter'd dust the Breath of Life, as at first he breathed Life into all things. *If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the Dead, dwell in you, he shall at last also quicken your mortal Bodies*, as he quickned his, Rom. 8. 11.

Quest. The Rising of the Saints, will no doubt be very Glorious. But what Perfections shall their Bodies receive at the Resurrection?

Ans. First, *Immortality*. Nothing after that shall ever be able to pain, decay, or annoy them; they shall not be liable to suffer, nor to die any more. *This corruptible must*

must put on incorruption ; and this mortal must put on immortality. 1 Cor. 15. 53. They cannot die any more, Luke 20. 36.

Secondly, Spirituality ; it is sown a Natural Body, it is raised a Spiritual Body, 1 Cor. 15. 44. Whereby is not meant, that it shall be a Spirit in Substance ; but that it shall have those Perfections of Spirits, wherein they excel Bodies. As, 1. being above the gross Pleasures of Sense, such as Eating, Drinking, and carnal Injoyments. In the Resurrection, they neither Marry, nor are given in Marriage, but are as the Angels, Mat. 22. 30. And Meats for the Belly, and the Belly for Meats, but God shall shortly destroy both it, and them, viz. in the Resurrection, when Men shall live without them, 1 Cor. 6. 13. 2dly, Vigor and Activity, such as may answer and keep pace with the vehement Transports, and quick Emotions of Glorified Souls, and be capable to support their Joys, bear their Raptures, and express their Activities. And 3dly, Agility, or Spriteliness in their motions, moveing towards all Points, upwards † into the Air and Clouds, as † 1 Theſ. 4. St. Paul notes of the Saints in their new Bodies, as well 17. as downwards : And to Places at any distance, with the quickness of Spirits ; whence they are able in a moment to appear, or disappear as the Soul pleases, as our Saviour's Body did after his Resurrection, and † our raised Bo- † Phil. 3. dies must be like his, being in this respect also equal to 21. the Angels, Luke 20. 36.

Quest Shall they receive any more Perfections ?

Ans. Yes, Thirdly, not only a perfect Beauty, instead of any Mishap or Deformity, but also a marvellous Brightness, or Glory. It is sown in Dishonour, but it is raised in Glory, 1 Cor. 15. 43. The Righteous shall shine forth as the Sun, in the Kingdom of the Father, Mat. 13. 43. Christ shall change our vile Body, that it may be like unto his Glorious Body, Phil. 3. 21. And that was full of glittering Splendor. Whilst he conversed with his Disciples, after his Resurrection here on Earth, he laid it aside, because fleshly eyes were not able to behold it, as appeared by its striking Saul blind, Acts 9. 3, 9. But in Heaven he shines with a dazeling Lustre. Thus he appeared from thence, to Stephen, Acts 7. 55. and to Paul, who describes the light of his Presence to have been above

the brightness of the Sun, Acts 26. 13. And his head, and his hairs were white like Wool, yea, as white as Snow, his Eyes as a Flame of Fire, his Feet like fine Brass burning in a Furnace, and his Countenance as the Sun, shining in its strength, in that Vision which St. John had of him in the Revelations, Rev. 1. 13, 14, 15, 16.

Quest. This will be a most happy Resurrection of the Just: But what kind of Bodies shall the Wicked have? shall theirs be immortal too?

Ans. Yes; but to their cost, and for no other end, but that they may be immortally punished. For when they always burn in Eternal Fire, they shall never be consumed by it.

Quest. And shall their raised Bodies be sensible of Torment?

Ans. Yes; far more than their Bodies are now; and they shall always have the smartest, and most terrible things in Nature to Torment them, viz. *Eternal Fire*. Depart from me ye Cursed into everlasting Fire, Mat. 25. 41. There they shall be tormented in the Flames, and not have so much, as a drop of Water, to cool their parched Tongue, Luke 16. 23, 24.

Quest. If it be thus extream violent, it will soon consume them; or, as extremity of pain sometimes causes distraction, it will so over power their Souls, that they shall not be able to mind, or attend to it?

Ans. No; as their sense of pains shall be most exquisite, and intolerable, so shall their Bodies be indissoluble, and their sense insuperable. As an Almighty Vengeance, shall ever inflict the most tormenting strokes upon them: so at the same time, an Almighty Power shall continue their strength to bear them, and an exquisite sense or feeling, to be most piercingly affected with them.

Quest. Must not this Belief of the Resurrection of the Body, comfort us upon the death of Friends, when we lay their Bodies in the Graves?

Ans. Yes; because those Bodies are not perished, but only slain asleep, and shall be infinitely more perfect, and glorious, and full of strength, when they awake out of it. I would not have you ignorant, Brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not even as others which have

no hope. For if we believe, that Jesus dyed, and rose again : even so them also, that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him, 1 Theff. 4. 13, 14.

Quest. And ought it not to arm us against the fear of our own death too ?

Ans. Yes ; for since, when our earthly House of this Tabernacle is dissolved, we have a Building of God, Eternal in the Heavens : in this we groan earnestly, desiring to be cloath'd upon, with our House which is from Heaven, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2.

Quest. What is the Twelfth, and last Article of the Creed ?

Ans. I Believe the Life Everlasting.

Quest. When good Mens Souls leave their Bodies, what becomes of them ?

Ans. They are carried into a place of Bliss and Refreshment, which *Christ*, in his Discourse to the Penitent Thief, called † Paradise ; and in the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, * Abraham's Bosom. And the care of conducting them thither, as *Christ* noted in the account of † Luke 23. 43. † Luke 16. 22. *Lazarus*, is committed to some good Angels. For some of these, as ministring Spirits, always attend the death-beds of God's Saints, and receive the departed Soul into their care ; to guard it from all frights and molestations of envious Fiends, as it passes thro' the Regions of the Air, which are the † Principality or Territory of the Powers of † Eph 2. 2. *Darkness* ; and to guide it in all that long passage, of new and unknown ways, which lead to the Blessed Receptacles of departed Spirits. Whereas the Souls of the Wicked, when they are thrust out of their Bodies, are left naked and defenceless, to be seiz'd on by those greedy and implacable Furies, and hurried away upon the award of their most just Judge, in extream anguish and despair, to their most wretched Prisons.

Quest. But at the Resurrection, I see both Good and Bad shall return to their Bodies again. And shall that Life last for ever ?

Ans. Yes ; for after once they are reunited, their Souls and Bodies shall never part any more ; but the good shall continue in everlasting pleasure, and the wicked in everlasting pain.

Quest.

Quest. What happiness is there, in that Eternal Life of the Righteous ?

Ans. All possible happiness which their hearts can wish, or their Nature is capable of. They shall see and enjoy God, who will give himself to them : and that implies every thing that is Beatifying, all the Blessedness which we can imagine, and infinitely more, being contain'd in God, and communicated together with him.

Quest. And shall this Blessedness never be imbitter'd to them, with any care, or fear, or grief, or crosses, as all the happiness of this present Life is ?

Ans. No ; *They shall neither hunger, nor thirst any more, Rev. 7. 16. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more Death, nor sorrow, nor crying, nor Pain, for all those former things are passed away, Rev. 21. 4.*

Quest. Shall all their Senses be gratified with the most delightful, and agreeable enjoyments ?

Ans. Yes ; such as the *Scripture* is wont to set off by *Feasts, and Banquets, and Marriage Entertainments* ; by melodious Songs, and joyful *Hallelujahs* ; by transporting sights of all the Beauty, the Glory, and Magnificence of the Heavenly Court ; the Majesty of God's Throne, and the Splendor of all the Heavenly Host that do surround it. Indeed, their exalted and refined Senses, are above the gross delights of Eating, and Drinking, and giving in Marriage. But such as these the *Scripture* uses, because our present state places so much in them. And whatsoever delight, and satisfaction, they may express to our present Capacities ; that, and abundance more, shall the enjoyments of that life yield to our glorified and improved Bodies.

Quest. 'Tis a great happiness, to have clear, and distinct knowledge of things, and not to be distracted with doubts, or posed with difficulties. Shall the Righteous in that Eternal Life, have such clear and advanced Understandings ?

Ans. Yes ; they shall get rid of all darkness, and doubtfulness of mind, and know every thing they desire, without study, or pains. *Now we see as in a Glass, darkly, but then face to face : Now we know in part, but then shall we know, even as also we are known, 1 Cor. 13. 12.*

Quest.

Quest. 'Tis a singular Point of Bliss, to be perfect in Holiness, which is one of the most blisful Attributes of God himself. Shall they also be such perfectly Holy Persons?

Ans. Yes; they shall excel in every Virtue, and Grace, wherein *Christ* himself doth: for *when he appears, we shall be like to him*, 1 Joh. 3. 2. And those they shall enjoy, free of all those weakneses and defects, whereby their Virtues are obscur'd, and lessen'd in this World. For in new Jerusalem, the Spirits of just Men are made perfect, Heb. 12. 23.

Quest. And shall they exercise all this Holiness without trouble and reluctance, which makes the practice of it painful here on Earth?

Ans. Yes; for they shall neither have any inward Lusts to oppose it, nor any outward Temptations to draw them from it. They hear no advice, nor see any example, but of what is good. Their inclinations are all rectified, and become Holiness to the Lord. Their Nature is perfect in good, and Duty is become their delight, so that in conforming entirely to the will of God, they do in the highest measure gratifie their own wills too.

Quest. And with this height of Knowledge, and of Holiness, shall they also be inwardly pleased in their own minds, and think themselves happy; without which, no Man is happy?

Ans. Yes; they must needs be infinitely pleased in every thing they have, and in every thing they do, for whatsoever comes to them, is pure happiness; and whatsoever proceeds from them, is full of Wisdom and Goodness, without the least word, or action, to repent of. Their State is all Joy, and Peace: *enter thou into the joy of thy Lord*, Mat. 25. 21. It is not bid to enter into them, being infinitely more than they can hold; but they into it, as into a vast Ocean of Bliss, whereof they shall always drink to the full, but never empty or exhaust it.

Quest. Indeed, such compleat Knowledge, and perfect Holiness, must needs give them cause of greatest satisfaction from themselves. But what sort of Company must they keep? will they be equally happy in that

Ans.

Ans. Yes ; unimaginably happy. For they will live always in the presence of God, who will ineffably Communicate himself to them ; and of *Jesus Christ*, who will infinitely rejoyce to see how happy he has made them ; and of the *Holy Ghost*, who will eternally Congratulate the reward of his own Graces in them ; and converse with *Angels, Apostles, and Glorified Saints*, and all their Godly dear Friends, whom they valued as their own Souls, and whom they clave so fast to in their hearts, that they could have followed them into the other World, when they were taken from them.

Quest. And all this God-like Society, are every way fitted to be the most happy, and delightful Companions ?

Ans. Yes ; to be the most blisful, that possibly can be thought of. For they are all light, and quickness in their understandings ; and all love, and tenderness in their Affections ; and most sweet, and obliging in their carriage, being perfectly free from all Anger, Crossness, Scorn, or Contempt, and from every thing that may give offence. They all look pleased, and inviting in their countenances ; and are exquisitely wise, useful, and entertaining in all their Discourses ; and all agree in the same Opinions, and speak the same things, and pursue the same ends, and are pleased in the same Objects, and have no strife among them, but who shall love highest, and oblige most, and be most like to God, and agreeable to each other, for evermore.

Quest. You say there shall be no strife, but who shall love most. Indeed, a state of love, which is not cooled by any unkindnesses, nor crossed by Disappointments, nor made unfortunate by the Follies, or Sufferings of those whom we dearly love, is absolutely the most agreeable, pleasant, and satisfactory Employment in the World. And amidst all these Companions, shall the Righteous be Perfect in this Love ?

Ans. Yes, most Perfect. For God is Love, and he that dwells in God, dwells in Love, 1 John 4. 16.

Quest. Will all that blessed Company entirely love us ?

Ans. Yes, as they do their own Souls ; they were full of Love, while they lived here ; loving even their Enemies, after *Christ's* Precept, and Example ; but especially the

the servants of God, in whom they discern'd his Image. But in Heaven they shall love us in Perfection, and be full Ripe and Compleat in this, as they are in all other Graces.

Quest. And shall we entirely Love all them?

Ans. Yes; they shall all be so absolute in all amiable Excellencies, and continually discover such a boundless Love for us, and our Natures will be so wholly framed for Love and Kindness; that we cannot chuse but love them, and that with the greatest fervour, and intenceness of Affection. And this will be all Pleasure, and no Pain, because they are incapable of doing any thing, that may either shame, or disgust us. God is all in all in them, and therefore they can do nothing, but what we, who entirely love God and them, may perfectly delight in.

Quest. If we shall have such entire Love for all the Saints in Bliss, we shall, as all true Friends do, partake in all their Joys, and all their Happiness will be ours?

Ans. It will be so; for Love of Happy Persons, multiplies Happiness, as oft as it multiplies Objects. Because, when we entirely love them, we esteem and are pleased with all their Happiness, as with our own. And this way, every Saint will be as full, as if they had a Monopoly of Bliss, and draw all the Happiness of Heaven to themselves.

Quest. But amidst all these inward Excellencies, and happy Company, and blissful intercourse of Kindness, shall they live in Honour, and be eminent in Place?

Ans. Yes, as *Kings* and *Princes*. They shall † *Sit on Thrones*, and wear * *Crowns* and *Scepters*, and be † *Sons of God*, and *Brethren*, and * *Joint-heirs* with *Christ*, 21. they shall † *inherit all things*, and not only have the Privilege to stand about *Christ's* Throne, but what would surpass belief, if Truth it self had not assured us of it, sit down with him thereon. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me in my Throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his Throne*, Rev. 3. 21. And besides this glory of their State, and eminence in Place; their Bodies, as I observed, shall be cloathed with the most Radiant Light, and surpass even the Sun it self in Brightness.

Quest.

† Rev. 3.

21.

* 1 Pet. 5. 4.

† 1 Jo. 3. 1.

* Rom 8.

17.

† Rev. 21. 7.

Quest. In what place must they live, to wear these Glories, and Feast on all this immense Happiness?

Ans. In the *Heaven of Heavens*, a Place situate on High, † *far above all visible things*, unspeakably vast in extent, and magnificent in Structure, and illustrious in Glory, the Presence Chamber of the great God, and King; where he lives incircled with Lustre, and † *Light inaccessible*, which no mortal Eye can approach unto, for no Man (as he told Moses) can see my Face and live, *Exod.* 33. 20. Here shall all Righteous Persons, with their immortal Eyes, ever see God, and shine in his Glory, and feast on all the forecited Joys and fulness of *Pleasure, which is at his Right hand for ever more*, *Psalms* 16. 11.

Quest. But if this happy enjoyment last long, will they not grow weary of it in the end; since humane Appetites are wont to love change, and loath the best things, if held constant to them?

Ans. No; as the enjoyments are, so is the desire and relish of them, always the same. The Goods are pure, having no ungrateful mixtures to be discover'd, and tasted by time: and the Appetite and Relish thereof is perfect, subject to no ebbs or flows, no weariness or alterations. So that we shall still desire, as well as enjoy these pleasant things, and find an inexpressible sweetness, and satisfaction in them.

Quest. And to Crown all, and render us secure in this Blessed State, shall the happiness of it be no fading transitory Thing, as all worldly pleasure is, but everlasting?

Ans. Yes; it will be always in its Spring, and look fresh, and flourish, thro' Eternal Ages. *The Pleasures at God's Right Hand, are for evermore*, *Psalms* 16. 11. *the weight of Glory is Eternal*, *2 Cor.* 4. 17. *the Kingdom cannot be moved*, *Heb.* 12. 28. *the Crown is incorruptible*, *1 Cor.* 9. 25. *that fadeth not away*, *1 Pet.* 5. 4. 'Tis not a limited happiness, held only for a term of years, or Ages, but an *Eternal Life*, *1 John* 5. 11.

Quest. This is such a perfection of Bli's, as is enough to make all Righteous Men impatient of living here, and long to die, as † St. Paul did, thereby to be possess'd of it?

† *Phil.* 1. 21, 23.

Ans.

Ans. It is so, indeed, if it contain'd no more than I have described. But when they come to enjoy it, they will find infinitely more than I have said, yea, than any Tongue can express, or heart imagine and apprehend concerning it. For *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it enter'd into the heart of man, to conceive the Things which God has prepared for those that love him,* 1 Cor. 2. 9.

Quest. I perceive, how Blissful the Eternal Life of the Righteous is. But the Wicked too shall be raised to an Eternal State, and what shall their Life be?

Ans. The most perfect misery, both of *Body and Soul*, whence in *Scripture*, when by *Life* is meant, not only the continuance in being, but the happiness of it, their state is call'd everlasting death, 2 Thel. 1. 8, 9. Rev. 2.

11.

Quest. What sorrow and torment shall the Wicked for ever endure in their Souls?

Ans. The torment of all vexatious Passions, being continually racked with Envy, Anger, Fruitless Cares, and Boundless Fears, utter despair of all relief, and yet extreme desires of it. And the Sting of Conscience, which shall pierce them thro' with bitter remorse, and gnaw perpetually like a Worm, upon their Hearts and Vitals; *their worm dieth not,* Mark 9. 44.

Quest. Indeed, all these mention'd Passions, when at the height, are so many Furies, especially distracting and amazing Fears, and Horrors. And shall wretched Souls be wholly seized by these?

Ans. Yes; as much as we may imagine they can possibly, who are surrounded on every side with the most milchievous and spiteful Enemies, and are left among them in the Dark, which, were it possible, would magnify their Fears by fancy, and make them infinite. To express which utter uncomfortableness, and insecurity, they are said to be cast into utter Darknes, Mat. 22. 13. and reserved unto Blackness of Darknes for ever, 2 Pet. 2.

17.

Quest. What is implied in the Worm of Conscience?

Ans. Bitter, and cutting remorse, for their own wretched folly, which has call'd down upon them those

in-

intolerable miseries, and utter and horrid despair, of ever removing or abating them.

Quest. Is this *String of Conscience* so extremely tormenting to Mens Souls, that it should be compared to a *Worm* preying upon their vitals?

Ans. Yes; for they who feel it, and such only can tell the smart of it, think it more exquisite and insupportable, than the pangs of death it self. And therefore they run greedily after Death, and seek by any means to make away themselves, in hopes thereby to get quit of it. *The Spirit of a man will sustain all other his infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* Prov. 18. 14. And if 'tis so intolerable here, where they have only some beginnings, and small fore-tastes thereof: what must it be, when horror is at the heighth, and despair and anguish is consummate, and the rage of all infernal Spirits is let loose, to represent at full the most formidable Phantasms, and imprint Anguish, and all sorts of Agonies and painful Horrors, with the utmost activity of Furious and powerful Spirits, as it will be in the next World.

Quest. But whilst their forlorn Souls are racked with all these horrible pangs, what shall become of their Bodies?

Ans. They shall burn in Flames, as I said, and endure all the Torment, which Men can feel in the hottest Fire. *They shall be cast into a Furnace of Fire,* Mat. 13. 42. and have their part in the Lake, which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second death, Rev. 21. 8.

Quest. This must needs cause excessive pain. But shall they not have something to mitigate, and make it easier?

Ans. No; not so much as a drop of water to cool their Tongue, when 'tis parched and tormented in the Flame, Luke 16. 24. Nor, that poor relief of those, who are extream weary, and sore, to shift sides, or change their posture. Bind him hand and foot, that he cannot stir, says our Lord, when he Condemns the Sinner to this Lake of Fire, Mat. 22. 13.

Quest. And shall desperate shame, and disgrace, be added to all this?

Ans.

Ans. Yes; For they are all as vile and hateful, to God, and all good Men, yea, and to themselves too, as they can be made; and it is purely their own wilful and wretched Folly, and desperate Wickedness, which has brought them to it.

Quest. But will not God, who is the hope and comfort of all that are in utter distress, look upon them, and shew them countenance, in this wretched state?

Ans. No; they shall never see his face, nor receive the least glimpse of favour from his Countenance. *He will say to them, depart from me ye Cursed, Mat. 25. 41. And they shall be punished with everlasting destruction, from the Presence of the Lord, 2 Thes. 1. 9.* He will not look upon them, but in wrath and fury, and never think of them in mercy any more.

Quest. But when God deserts them, shall they be quite forsaken? or, will they not be allowed some Company in this distress?

Ans. Yes; but that shall be the *Company of Devils, and tormenting Spirits*, who thirst more after Blood, than ever the most starved Appetite did after food: and who have no other way, to ease their own pains, but by the satisfaction of augmenting theirs. *Go into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil, and his Angels, Mat. 25. 41.*

Quest. But amidst all this horrid Crew, that take such pleasure to despise them, shall there be none to help them, when they are unable to help themselves, at least to pity, and condole with them?

Ans. No, there are none, but Partners in destruction, who are all too full of their own Miseries, to attend theirs. And all these in Nature are perfect Furies, that have no love and tenderness for others. For Hell is no place for pity and kindness: since *he that dwells in love, dwells in God*, as St. John says, *1 John 4. 16.* So that there they shall have no Friend, either to help, or hearten, or sympathize with them. But all about them shall spitefully vex and reproach them, and add more to their burden, which is already heavier, by far, than they can bear.

Quest. But there is one thing still, that, in the extreamest Torments, gives some ease and recruit of Spirits, tho' it cannot give a full deliverance, and that is *Rest* and *Sleep*. And shall not miserable Wretches have some rest from these Torments?

Ans. No; for *the smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever, and they have no rest, day nor night*, Rev. 14. 11.

Quest. But if this Torment, be thus without all intermission, and thus violent, sure it will not *last long*, but they will come in good time to an end of it?

Ans. No, it shall never end. Their Bodies, as I noted, shall be made indissoluble, and immortal, only that their pains may be immortal. *Their worm dieth not, and their Fire never shall be quenched*, Mark 9. 43, 44. And this the Holy Scripture speaks of the Eternity of these Punishments, not only by way of threatening, to render all impenitent Criminals liable to suffer the same: but also Declaratively, or by way of Narrative and Relation of the State of the other World. So that the pains which the Miserable do endure there, are endless pains; or else these Scriptures would not speak true, or be verified as an Historical Account thereof.

Quest. Doth mere Threatning of Punishments always bind up the Sovereign Rulers, either in Truth or Justice, to a rigorous and indispensible Execution of all that Punishment which their Laws threaten?

Ans. No; for that would leave Governours, who Rule by Laws, no Power of Pardoning in any Case. And God himself doth abate and dispense in *Jesus Christ*, with that Death which he had threatned to us all in *Adam*. As for *Promises*, indeed, they give Right to others: and therefore, when the Persons concern'd claim the Benefit thereof, they must be perform'd with Exactness, and cannot be with-held, either in whole or in part, without injustice. But *Threatnings* give no Right or Claim to others, not coming to vest the Subjects with any desirable Privileges, which they will be forward to claim at the Hands of their Rulers: but to subject and make them liable to painfull Burdens, which they would avoid if they could, and always suffer against their Wills. But thereby the Rulers acquire a Right to themselves, of

execu-

executing Punishments on their offending Subjects. And this Right being their own, they may abate thereof without wronging any in certain Cases, and recede from the same where they see great Reason and just Cause. So that mere Threatning of any Punishments, do not always rye up Governours to the utmost Execution of it in all Cases.

Howbeit, it doth require that they exact the same ordinarily, and in general course. For it may seem needful in Government, and appertaining to the veracity and justice thereof, that the punishment threatned should ordinarily be exacted, because otherwise Threatnings would lose their Effect, and Men would have little Fear of suffering what is denounced by them. And as for those Eternal Punishments, which the Gospel denounces to all impenitent Sinners, there is no room left for us to hope that ever God should dispense with them. When there was great Reason to remit that Death, which he had threatned to all Mankind in *Adam*; he shew'd such inexorableness, as would not Dispense therewith upon a less exchange, than the Death and Sacrifice of his own only begotten Son. And what place then, for the Hopes of a second Dispensation, seeing, if this Grace is neglected, he has no more Sons to make Expiation, and dye for us again? Besides, he was strict in exacting what was threatned by *Moses*: and if the Word spoken to *Moses*, by the Ministry of Angels, was steadfast, as *St. Paul* says, and every Transgression and Disobedience Received a just Recompence of Reward; How shall we escape the Vengeance threatend by *Jesus Christ*, if we neglect the Salvation which his Gospel offers, and incur the Threatnings which it has denounced against all impenitent Sinners? *Heb. 2. 2, 3.* Not to add moreover, that these Eternal Torments are spoken of, as I said, not only by way of Threatning, but also by way of Narrative and Declaration: and we may be sure that all things in the other World are such, as our Blessed Lord who came from thence, and his holy Apostles and Pen Men report and represent them to be.

Quest. Good God! how intolerable, and irremediable is this State? will not every Man, who believes he shall unavoidably suffer all this for persisting wicked, take any

pains, and endure any hardships in Religion, and the amendment of his Life, to prevent it?

Ans. Yes; most certainly, and this is the wise use which we are to make of it. *Knowing the Terrors of the Lord,* in executing the Wicked after the last Judgment, *we persuade men to live well here,* without which there is no avoiding them, 2 Cor. 5. 11.

Quest. And since the happiness of the Righteous, is so infinitely lasting, and large, must not the belief of that, make us contemn all the short pleasures of Sin, which would bereave us thereof; and think all the sufferings of Virtue, nothing in comparison of the reward, that doth attend it?

Ans. Yes; for since the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that shall be revealed in us, neither Death, nor Life, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. 8. 18, 38, 39.

THE Declaration and Profession,

Of the Reverend

Mr. John Kettlewell;

Made by him at Receiving the Holy
Sacrament, from the Hands of the
Late Right Reverend Father in God,
William, Lord Bishop of Norwich,
Depriv'd. March 23. 1691.

Looking upon my self under my present
Weakness, as having but little time
to continue in this World, and wait-
ing patiently for my Change sooner or later;
as it shall please Almighty God, in whose
Hands my Times are, and I desire they
should be, to send it; I think fit to make,
and leave behind me, This *Declaration* and
Profession following.

I profess firmly and stedfastly, to Believe
the Creed whereinto I was Baptized, the
Holy Catholick Faith, in the Father, Son,
and Holy Ghost. In which Blessed God-
Head, I humbly believe, and religiously a-
dore, both the *Unity in Trinity*, and also
the *Trinity in Unity*. A a 3 I

I profess to continue firm and stedfast in the Unity and Communion of Christ's Holy Catholick Church; being freely and heartily ready, to joyn with all sound Members in the Communion thereof, in all Holy and Divine Offices, as the Providence of God should bring them to me, or me to them; to demean my self towards them in all things as my Brethren; and to be affected with what befalls them, as one Member ought to be with the Joy or Grief of another. And as for those who are broken off from the true and saving Faith, Worship, or Unity of this Body; I heartily pity them, and pray for their Recovery and Re-union.

And having been, not only made a Member, but by my Blessed Master Jesus Christ's inestimable Vouchsafement, called to be a Minister of His, in the Church of England; I do Profess and Declare, That as I have Lived and Minister'd hitherto, so I do still continue Firm, in its Faith, Worship, and Communion.

And as for my Deprivation of my Living, since this late Revolution, in company with many other Excellent and Pious Persons, for not taking the new Oath of Allegiance, to those who claim'd the same; As I did, so I still do firmly believe, That it was on many

great and dreadfull Accounts, my *bounden Duty* absolutely to refuse the same. And that such Refusal was, and is, a most *righteous and rewardable Cause of Suffering*. I bless my God, who was pleas'd to call me, and enable me thereby, to give a proof of the sincerity of my Love and Preference of Him before this World, by willingly, and gladly quitting a worldly Livelibood for his sake. And as upon this *Righteous account*, I parted with my Living, with much more satisfaction and pleasure of mind, than I at first receiv'd it with; so, blessed be God's Holy Name, I take the same Comfort and Satisfaction therein still.

And as for the most unhappy and lamentable Breach of Church Unity and Communion among *us*, by setting up Bishop against Bishop, on account of this *New Oath* of Allegiance, and for the continuance and confirmation of the matter thereof, in the Publick and daily Offices and Ministrations of Religion; making both Oaths and Holy Offices, as much as may be, in all Points subservient to this *New-Allegiance*: In this most sorrowful Breach of Church-Society, I profess, that, as I have done hitherto, so I do still heartily and firmly embrace and continue in the *Communion of those Orthodox and Rightful Bishops, and the Clergy and People adhering unto them, who have suffer'd,* as I believe, for their stedfastness to the

Rules of Righteousness, in the Refusal of this *New Oath*, and who keep their Divine *Offices* and *Ministrations*, free from all those things, which my Conscience sticks at in the same ; Being now about to Receive the Benefit of Absolution, and the Blessed Eucharist from *the Hands of one of them*. I heartily and earnestly pray for the cure of this most Great and Grievous Breach. And whensoever the time of Healing shall come, the Lord, who purchased his *Church* with his own Blood, put the work of Healing and Re-Union into wise and good Hands, who, without Passion, or Personal Prejudices, or any regard to past Wrongs, or private Interests, shall faithfully, and unbiassedly pursue the blessed Work of Christian Union, and be willing, and glad to see those Truths, which make for Unity, and will have nothing else in their Eye, but how to Re-settle this poor broken Church in *Truth, Purity, Unity and Peace*.

As for the Books which I have writ since *this Revolution*, to keep up among my Christian Brethren, a sense of truly Apostolical and Primitive Morals, at a time when most seem'd bent to start, or take up with any shifts or salvo's, to set the same aside, for their worldly safety : or, to direct them about their Civil Obedience, and comfort and support them under any worldly dangers or sufferings, for the same : or to guide them

them in their way of Worship, that they may perform the same with Purity, and in the Unity and Communion of Christ's Holy Church: I bless God, my sincere Design in writing and publishing them, was with much Pains, and some Hazard, to serve my Blessed Master; and, as I thought, the great and pressing need of his Church and People amongst us: And as I truly, and sincerely believed all the Points I have taught and delivered therein, when I wrote and published them; so I do now profess, that after all the time I have had to consider them since; and after all that I have heard or met with, in opposition to any Matters contained therein, which I think I have duly weigh'd, and look'd through, I do truly and sincerely believe them all to be true still.

And all this I have solemnly Professed and Declared, for the Benefit and Satisfaction of Those, who shall be desirous to know, whether I continued in the Belief and Practice of the same Things at my Death, which I Professed, Taught, and Practis'd, in my Life. And to this *Profession and Declaration*, I set my Hand, this 23d of March, 1694.

John Kettlewell.

He

He died *April 12, 1695*, in the 42d Year of his Age; and was Buried in the Parish Church of *Allballows Barking*, near the Tower of *London*; in the same Grave where Archbishop *Laud* was before Interr'd, within the Rails of the Altar; near which is a neat Marble Monument, erected to his pious Memory, by his vertuous and worthy Widow: with this Inscription,

Quod Mori Potuit

Johannis Kettlewell

A. M.

Ecclesiae Anglicanae Presbyteri

Integerrimi Instructissimiq;

Viri Pietatis, Modestiae Singularis

Ut verbo omnia, verè Christiani

Qualem facere par est

Qui Totius OFFICII NOSTRI RATIONES

(Annum adhuc agens vigesimum quartum)

Feliciter adeo atq; ex animo explicuit,

Ut dictu haud sit facile mores alienos

Ad virtutem Evangelicam efformaverit magis

An ad vivum depinxerit suos

*Ecclesiæ Paroch: de Coles-hill in Agro
Warwic :*

Per Annos Septem invigilavit

Pastor fidissimus, Prudentissimusq;

Fortuna tandem utriusq; Victor

Animam Deo Reddidit

April 12^{mo} An. Dom. 1695. Etat. 42.

MORTE TALI VITA DIGNA.

His Funeral Rites were solemnized, by the Right Reverend Father in God, Dr. *Tho. Kenn*, Lord Bishop of *Bath and Wells*, Depriv'd : Who read the Burial-Office, and the whole Evening Service in his Episcopal Habits : Mr. *Bell*, who attended him during his Sickness, and whom he desir'd to perform this last Office, consenting thereunto.

His

Requiescat in pace; ex animo explicuit

Ut illis dandi sit facilius moras aliorum

Adventum Evangelium effluens universis magis

An ad vitam deponeret suam

Barthol. P. arch: de Cors-hill in Agro

Warwic

Per annos Septem investigavit

Per se habuit, Prudentissimam

Fortuna tandem utinam; Victor

Animam Deo Reddidit

April 12^{mo} An. Dom. 1697. Etat. 42.

MORTE TALI VITA DIGNA.



His Epitaphis et Monumentis, by
the Right Honourable in God, Dr.
The Kenn, Lord Bishop of Bath and Wells,
Depriv'd: Who read the Burial-Office,
and the whole Evening Service in his Epis-
copal Habits: Mr. Bell, who attended
him during his sickness, and whom he de-
sir'd to perform this last Office, consenting
therunto.

His

His WORKS are,

Before the Revolution.

THE Measures of Christian Obedience, Or, a Discourse shewing what Obedience is indispensably necessary to a Regenerate state, and what Defects are consistent with it; For the promotion of Piety, and the peace of troubled Consciences.

An Help and Exhortation to worthy Communicating; or, a Treatise describing the Meaning, worthy Reception, Duty and Benefits of the Holy Sacrament. And answering the Doubts of Conscience, and other Reasons, which most generally detain Men from it. Together with suitable Devotions added.

The *Practical Believer*; or, the Articles of the Apostle's Creed. Drawn out to form a true Christian's Heart and Practice. In Two Parts.

Five Discourses on so many important Points of Religion. To which are added four Sermons publish'd by the Author in his Life-time; with a Preface, wherein the Author's Character is attempted. By R. Nelson, Esq;

Since

Since the Revolution.

OF Christian Prudence, or Religious Wisdom, not degenerating into Irreligious Craftiness, in *Trying Times*. London, 1691.

Christianity a Doctrine of the Cross; or, Passive Obedience under any pretended Invasion of Legal Rights and Liberties.

The Duty of Allegiance settled upon its true Grounds, according to Scripture, Reason, and the Opinion of the Church, in answer to a late Book of Dr. William Sherlock, entitled, *The Case of Allegiance due to Sovereign Powers*,

A Companion for the Persecuted; or, an Office for those who suffer for Righteousness. 1694.

A Companion for the Penitent; and for Persons troubled in Mind. 1694.

Death made comfortable; or, the way to die well. 1695.

Of Christian Communion to be held in the Unity of Christ's Church, and among the Professors of Truth and Holiness. 1693.

An Office for Prisoners for Crimes, together with another for Prisoners for Debt. Containing both proper Directions, and pro-

proper Prayers and Devotions for each
of their Needs and Circumstances. 1697.

Publiſh'd by *R. Nelson, Eſq;*

The great Evil, and Danger of Pro-
fuſeneſs and Prodigality ; in a Letter to
a Friend. 1705. With a Preface by *R. Nel-
ſon, Eſq;*

proper Prayers and Devotions for each
of their Needs and Circumstances. 1697.

Published by R. Nelson, Esq.

The great Evil, and Danger of Pro-
fane and Irreligious; in a Letter to
Friends. 1701. With a Preface by R. Nel-

son, Esq.

